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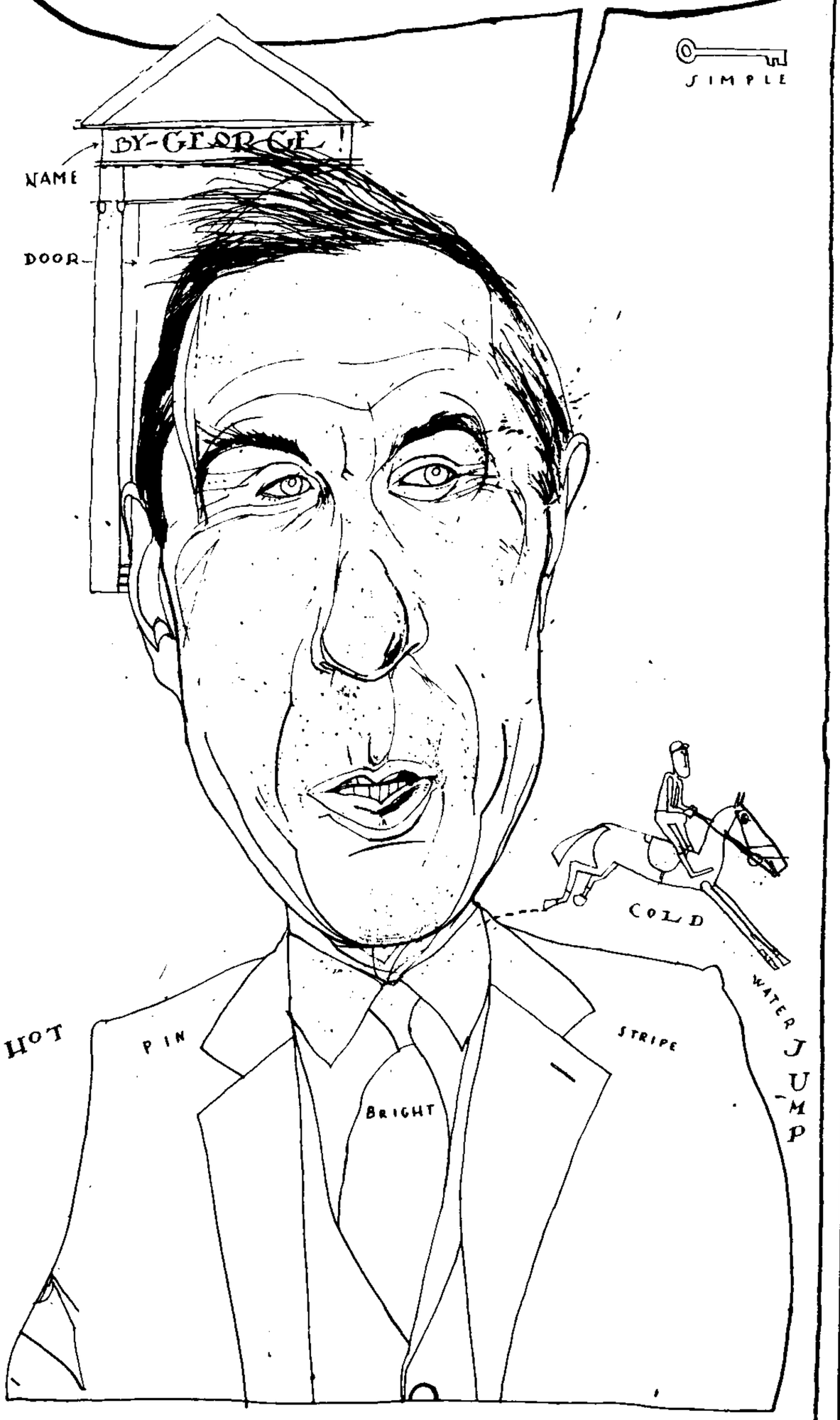

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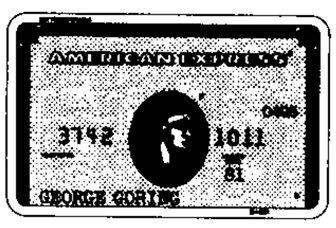

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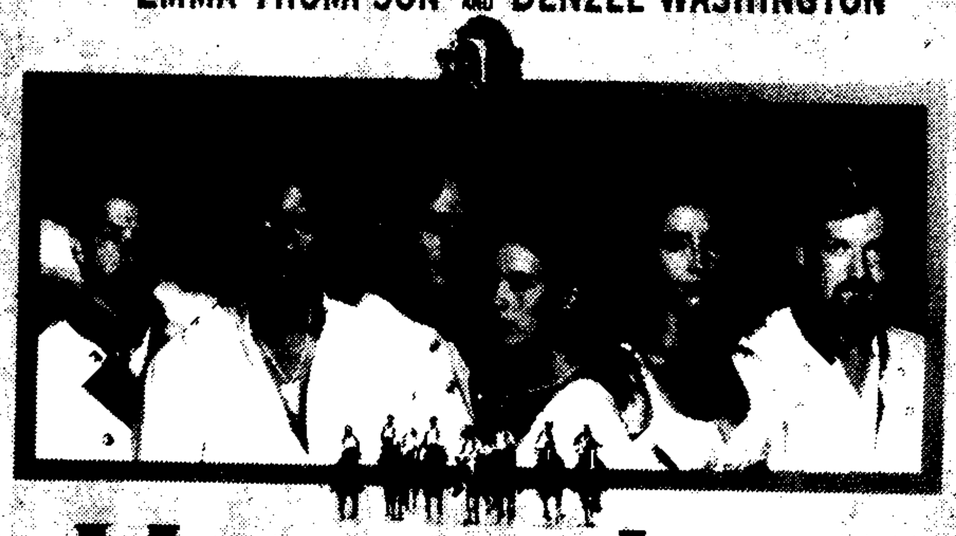

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING PG

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MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE ADAPTED FOR THE SCREEN BY KENNETH BRANAGH COSTUME DESIGNER PHYLLIS DALTON
PRODUCTION DESIGNER TIM HARVEY EDITOR ANDREW MARCUS DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ROGER LANSER
MUSIC BY PATRICK DOYLE PRODUCED BY STEPHEN EVANS, DAVID PARFITT & KENNETH BRANAGH DIRECTED BY KENNETH BRANAGH

IN THE WEST END AND AT CINEMAS NATIONWIDE NOW

Gnome

I WOULD like to say at once that I have no wish to become leader of the Conservative Party.

It is the very last job in the world that I desire. I can honestly say the thought of it has never even crossed my mind.

As is well known, my support for the Prime Minister has always been 100 per cent solid and I see no reason to change that just because he is facing unprecedented criticism from all sides of the Party.

This is no time for disloyalty which is, after all, a Labour rather than a Conservative characteristic.

No, now is the time for everyone to put thoughts of personal advantage to one side and to pull together for the sake of the Party and the country.

I urge other senior Conservatives to follow my example and refrain from throwing unwanted "hats in the ring".

E. Strobes
pp. Lord Gnome
No.10 Downing Street
London
(shome mishtake? E.S.)

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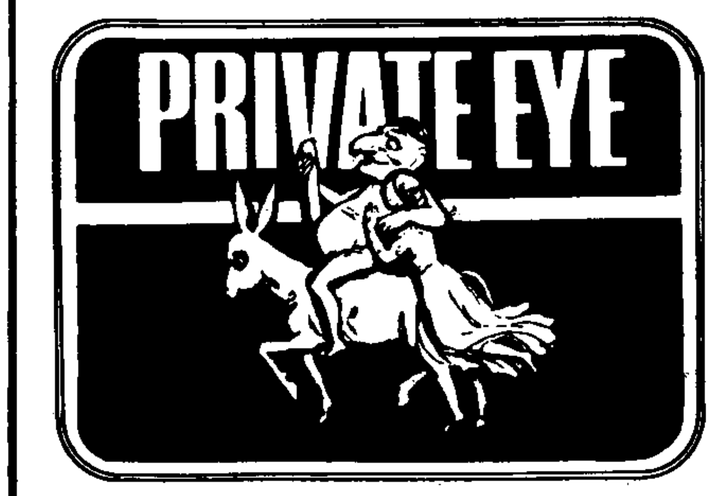


COLOUR SECTION

ALAN CLARK, so silent about his share-dealing through a now disgraced stockbroker, may maintain his silence at the Scott inquiry into Iraqgate.

Since it was Clark's revelation at the Matrix Churchill trial that he and his ministry, the department of trade, had been "economical with the *actualité*" about arms for Iraq, his failure to appear would be a pity.

It would mean, among other things, that he wouldn't be able to explain the curious photograph of him with Raja Hassan Ali, the Iraqi minister for trade and militarisation, which was proudly displayed in 1988 in the Hutteen factory, Baghdad.

The Hutteen was almost exclusively involved in producing arms and was vital in equipping Saddam's war effort after the invasion of Kuwait in 1990. The factory manager would proudly tell visitors that it was Clark's help in getting credit guarantees which made possible the tooling of the factory with British machine tools.

Another ministerial visitor (though there is no photograph) boasted by the factory manager was William Waldegrave, who may be asked about that in his evidence to Scott this week.

IRAQGATE: see Footnotes, p.27

HACKS who are serious about investigative reporting will be pleased that the European Commission of Human Rights agreed earlier this month to investigate the case of Bill Goodwin — the British journalist fined £5,000 for refusing court orders to disclose a source of information.

As a trainee reporter on *The Engineer* magazine, Goodwin faced the prospect of prison for sticking to what is supposed to be the first tenet of journalism. By pursuing the case to Europe over the past four years, he is striking a blow for hacks and publishers alike.

So how is he being rewarded by Morgan-Grampian, publisher of *The Engineer* and part of Lord Stevens' United empire? He is being made redundant this month, as part of a downgrading of *The Engineer*'s news content.

Publishers. Don'tcha just love 'em?

EYE readers will recall the case of Brett Kimberlin, the American convict put into solitary confinement for his public spirited act in remembering young Dan Quayle, the former vice-president, as one of his regular customers for marijuana.

With the help of America's freedom of information act, Associated Press has now secured the report of the inspector general of prisons, Richard J. Hankinson, which agrees, amazingly, that Kimberlin was *not* locked up for his own protection, as was claimed at the time.

Less amazingly Hankinson could find no signs of outside political interference in the decision, but then he was appointed by President George Bush, Quayle's running mate.

In the meantime Kimberlin still has the best part of 51 years to serve, and is unlikely to get much sympathy from the non-inhaling Clinton.

THE *Eye* has received the following letter from Farrer & Co. It was written by senior partner Richard Griffiths and Mary Picton-Turberville.

Sir,

We act for Lord Parkinson. In the issue of Private Eye dated 10 September 1993, you published an article in the Grovel column about our client. *[The allegation has been omitted in order to comply with the court order.]* It is hard to imagine a more repellent allegation.

Subsequent to the publication of your article, Granada Television on 12 September broadcast the Judy Finnigan show which included similar statements by Miss Sara Keays. Those allegations were then given extensive media coverage over the next few days.

Lord Parkinson was covered by the Order made by the Court on 9 March 1993. *[Passage omitted in order to comply with court order.]* Until now, therefore, Lord Parkinson has been in the invidious position of being unable to set the record straight and defend himself against the defamatory allegations made against him of which, we have to say, possibly the most poisonous example was published by you.

Lord Parkinson was obliged to return to Court to obtain the Court's leave to make a statement, a copy of which is enclosed. The statement is endorsed with the Hon Mr Justice Singer's approval.

The hearing, because it concerned issues relating to a child's welfare, was in private but the Judge concluded the hearing in Open Court. We enclose a copy of our note of the Judge's concluding remarks as approved by him.

It will be clear to you that the statements you have published are untrue. Lord Parkinson is in the strongest imaginable position to bring proceedings for libel. After the hearing this week, however, he sees no merit in there being further litigation over these allegations. We must, however, warn you that if these slurs should be repeated they will be the subject of libel proceedings against you. Those proceedings will include a claim for exemplary damages because they will be published by you in the knowledge that they are untrue.

Yours faithfully,
FARRER & CO,
London WC2.

The editor has replied as follows: Thank you for your letter. You write: "It will be clear to you that the statements you have published are untrue." You also write: "The Judy Finnigan show included similar statements by Miss Sarah Keays."

Your position must therefore be that Miss Keays is a liar. To my knowledge she has not withdrawn what she said on the show. She subsequently apologised for the contempt but not the content of her remarks.

What evidence is there to suggest Miss Keays was lying? Is the only such evidence Lord Parkinson's statement, which he got special permission to circulate? His statement does not tell us everything about the case. You, of course, know about such matters. We and the public cannot know or publish anything about them or comment on them because of the very strict nature of the court order served on us, restricting us from any report of the original proceedings.

While this order remains, we are left with Lord Parkinson's word against that of Sarah Keays. That is hardly "the strongest imaginable position" for a libel action.

Nor would the repetition of Sarah Keays's remarks on the television show give you grounds for "exemplary" damages, or any other damages for that matter, on the grounds that I know them to be untrue. How do I know them to be untrue?

I am not intending to refer to this matter again, since both sides of the argument have now come out into the open. But your suggestion that there is only one side, your client's, seems to merit a reply.

Street Of Shame

KILLER Sams bids to cash in on his crimes **screamed a headline in the *Daily Mirror* on 6 September announcing an "exclusive" by the rag's Midlands correspondent Rod Chaytor.**

He reported that Michael Sams, recently convicted of the murder of Julie Dart and the kidnap of estate agent Stephanie Slater, was trying to raise "blood money" for his third wife Teena by writing a manuscript about his life and crimes. The tone of the *Mirror* piece was one of moral outrage, and it claimed that Julie Dart's mother Lynn was intending to write to the Queen to request a change in the law.

But there is a sense of *deja vu* here. Back in 1981, when Peter Sutcliffe, the Yorkshire Ripper, was convicted and various newspapers scrambled to buy up his relatives, in particular his wife Sonia, the mother of one of the Ripper's victims wrote to the Queen along similar lines.

The result was a Press Council ruling that newspapers should not pay money to the relatives of convicted criminals, but the ruling contained a loophole in that it did not prohibit payments by newspapers to intermediaries such as news agencies. Thus the *Daily Mirror* was able to pay £22,500 to Hopkinson's News Agency of Bradford for the story of Michael Sams's mother, Iris Walker. The agency pocketed £7,500 in "blood money", while Iris Walker received £15,000 — and still the Mirror is able to maintain — spuriously — that it has paid no money to the murderer's relatives.

The *Sunday Mirror*, too, carried a piece giving Teena Sams's story, which was provided by a Birmingham news agency. The paper is alleged to have paid the agency around £20,000.

THERE WAS a distinct absence of fraternal relations at a farewell party for a union official held at Ye Olde Bell in Fleet Street earlier this month, which was attended by the *Grauniad*'s Seumas "Scargill is Innocent" Milne and Paul "Scargill is Guilty" Routledge, late of the *Observer*, both of whom have recently written books about the NUM leader.

When Milne was shown a copy of Routledge's book by BBC Radio's Steve Evans he promptly demonstrated his objectivity by faxing key pages to Scargill's lawyers. Routledge flew into a rage and called Milne a "snake in the grass", or words to that effect. The pair then spilled out of the pub on to the pavement, where bystanders were treated to a display of Fleet Street comradeship at its finest.

The drama continued later that week at the TUC in Brighton, where both hacks addressed a fringe meeting at the Royal Albion Hotel organised by the Campaign for Press and Broadcasting Freedom. Routledge, arriving after a convivial afternoon in the Fiddler's Elbow tavern, made a rambling, incoherent speech for around 20 minutes during which he consumed gallons of water, sweated profusely and breathed pickled-onion fumes on to the front row.

The heat and the pressure also seemed to affect Milne. After a brief harangue in which he condemned Fleet Street's finest for their "appalling" lack of professionalism, he promptly collapsed in a dead faint on the floor at the feet of NUJ general secretary John Foster.

The subject of the meeting, fittingly enough, was the decline in standards of labour reporting.

CITY editors have been going into ecstasies in recent weeks about the "sparkling" achievements of Mirror Group Newspapers under the leadership of David "Rommel" Montgomery.

The latest ABC circulation figures, released last week, tell a rather different story. In the past year the *Daily Mirror*'s sales have plummeted by more than 136,000 copies, while during the same period the *Sun*'s have risen by almost 250,000. The gap between the two papers has now widened to more than a million.

Desperately clutching at straws, Rommel's colleagues draw attention to the fact that the *Mirror*'s circulation rose by 46,000 during August. What they neglect to mention is that most of these copies were given away free at petrol stations as part of a "promotion campaign".

The rest of the increase is accounted for by a bit of semantic jiggery-pokery whereby MGN has managed to get the Channel Islands reclassified as "foreign". This means the paper no longer has to deduct "returns" — ie unsold copies — from its sales figure for the islands. Rommel can therefore send thousands of copies of his wretched organ to Guernsey, Jersey, etc and count them all as sales — even if nobody buys them.

JUST FANCY THAT

Mr Cairns is also convinced that action against the trade association has involved the hiring of private — *check with the lawyers, dh* detectives to spy on meetings of Nail members at his premises. (*Independent on Sunday*)

'dh' is believed to refer to Indy investigator, David Hellier.

MEANWHILE, *Mirror* hacks are glumly preparing for the paper's forthcoming move from Holborn Circus to the suburbs, aka Canary Wharf. Almost the only person in the building who seems pleased by the relocation is David Montgomery, who boasted last week that "the move severs MGN's final links with its Maxwellian past."

Oh really? The current chairman of Mirror Group Newspapers, Sir Robert Clark, was a close associate of Cap'n Bob from the 1960s onwards. And MGN's managing director, in charge of the move to Canary Wharf, is still Charlie "Gorbals" Wilson, formerly Maxwell's right-hand man, who sat on the MGN board throughout the period when the Fat Man was stealing millions of pounds from the company.

Interestingly enough, it was Clark and Wilson who forced through Montgomery's own appointment to the Mirror Group last year. One can quite understand, therefore, why he wishes to turn a blind eye to their Maxwellian associations.

NEWSPAPER Publishing plc, publisher of the *Indescribablyboring*, has demonstrated its tenuous grip on reality by appointing Patrick Morrissey as its new chief executive to replace Andreas Whittam-Smith.

The paper announced the appointment and quoted Ian Hay Davison, the company's chairman, as paying tribute to Morrissey's "proven track record at turning round businesses, and a deep understanding of marketing".

Renowned as the man who, while working for the Beecham Group, decided to put a pink stripe into some toothpaste, Morrissey was managing director of Mirror Group Newspapers from 1985 to 1990, where he irritated hacks by referring to the group's newspaper titles as "the product".

Curiously, the *Indie* announcement failed to mention the one name that is most closely associated with Morrissey's career in the second half of the 1980s: "Maxwell". It was almost as if the Mirror Group and Maxwell had had nothing to do with one another. Morrissey is a grey bureaucrat. He was also, while working for Cap'n Bob, a fantastic toady who, in common with others, allowed Maxwell to run a public company as his personal fiefdom.

THINGS GO from bad to worse at Manchester's Black Lubianka, the former *Daily Express* building that is now the tatty home of the newspaper empire owned by podgy porn king David "The Slug" Sullivan.

While weeping hacks on the *Daily Sport* were being told how drastic economies and belt-tightening meant a dozen or so of their jobs had to go, the noise of merriment and champagne corks a-popping drifted down from upstairs where, with an impressive lack of tact, staff on Sullivan's pisspoor Sunday *News and Echo* were celebrating their first birthday party. Even corpulent columnist Cyril Smith managed to waddle along to join the boozy thrash.

Twenty-four hours later, the few disillusioned soccer writers still left at the *Spurt* received a bizarre phone call from glamorous Karren Brady, Sullivan's sultry Girl Friday who is now the managing director of Birmingham City football club. She demanded that they break off from producing the following day's paper and immediately send her a pin-up picture of Manchester United starlet Ryan Giggs. Apparently she wanted it to grace the walls of her boudoir.

TINY ROWLAND'S Lonrho, having lost a packet on the *Observer* over many years, is belatedly trying to recover some of its loot by asset-stripping the paper.

Although the title is now owned by the *Grauniad*, the lease on the newspaper's office in Battersea still belongs to Lonrho — and Rowland's lackeys are busily grabbing all the fixtures and fittings they can lay their hands on before the hacks are moved into the *Grauniad* HQ in Farringdon Road. They patrol at night and at weekends, removing anything that isn't actually nailed down.

One victim of these marauding parties is Kimi Zhabiyan, head of the *Observer* film unit. During a working trip to Jamaica recently, she left her personal laptop computer at the office for fear that it might be stolen if she took it with her. On her return, she found the computer had been pinched, on the instructions of *Observer* director John Witts.

After much indignant railing, Zhabiyan got the computer back. She then cornered the wretched Witts and took him to task. He burbled that it was his job to secure property at the *Observer* for Lonrho. She pointed out that the computer was her personal property. Startlingly, Wittless replied that anything in the building was held to belong to Lonrho.

What remains of the *Observer*'s staff now wonder whether it is safe to bring their wallets to the office.

JUST FANCY THAT

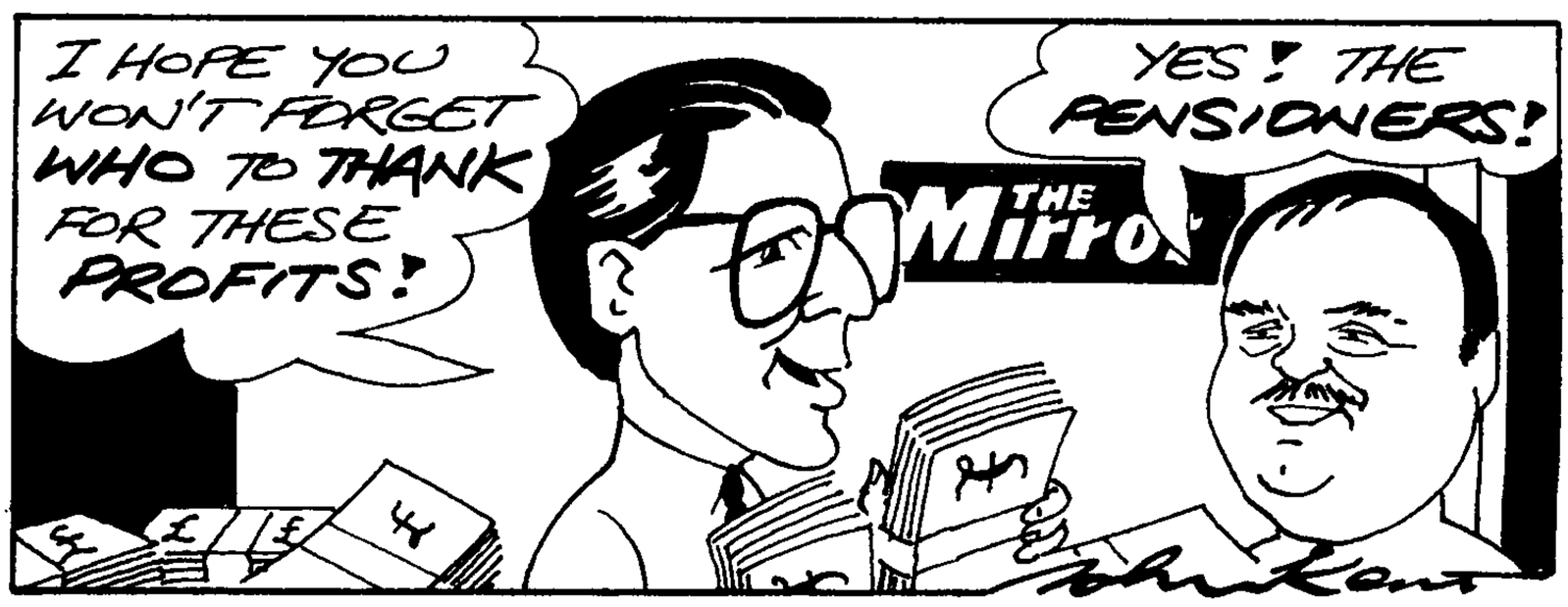
■ IF six-year-old meat is to be sold to the public then it should be sold at six-year-old prices. (Letter from Mrs Charlotte Dodds)

Daily Mail, 9.9.93.

■ **PROVIDING it tastes good — and, according to Food Minister Nicholas Soames, it tastes very good indeed — I have not the slightest objection to eating six-year-old beef. But I do make one point. Shouldn't it be sold at six-year-old prices?**

John Junor, Mail on Sunday, 12.9.93.

Rommel



FRATRICIDE in the Tory party has reached unprecedented levels in leafy Sutton and Cheam, whose MP is the former gossip columnist and Families for War campaigner, Lady Olga Maitland.

In an attempt to revive the almost extinct Young Conservatives in the suburban constituency, an assortment of MPs were invited to speak. They were Richard Shepherd (Aldridge Brownhills); Nicholas Budgen (Wolverhampton South West); and James Cran (Beverley), a former Sutton councillor.

All three agreed and the dates were settled (Budgen, for instance, was to speak on 1 November). Then suddenly all three were contacted by Lady Olga's office, and the meetings were abruptly called off.

FACT: All three MPs are Maastricht rebels, of the type whose views might be expected to go down well with Sutton YCs.

ANOTHER FACT: Lady Olga's loyalty to the prime minister is amazing.

SPENCER BATISTE, the Tory MP for Elmet, is another recruit to the growing band of honourable members (*Eye* 827) who realises that the privatisation of British Rail could be a total disaster while helping the ridiculous railways (destruction) bill become law.

Batiste, during a long conversation with an *Eye* reader, admitted that privatisation plans may have to be "rethought" if all does not go well. Unless vast sums of public money are found, it is far from clear how "rethinking" Michael Portillo's franchise ideas will bring back the thousands of passengers who desert the privatised railway because the competition — the private car — is so much cheaper.

Will other Tory MPs who feel the same way as Mr Batiste make themselves known? Watch this space...

VISITING his local newsagent recently, George Robertson MP, the Scottish Labour member for Hamilton, dutifully signed a petition handed to him by the shopkeeper opposing the government's threats to extend VAT to books and newspapers.

"Sure, I'll do it," said the MP, "but you know what this government is like. If they put VAT on poor people's fuel bills than can put it on newspapers."

"They wouldn't be so stupid as to make the same mistake twice," retorted the newsagent fiercely. And he should know. George Robertson's newsagent is Keith Harding, Conservative leader of Stirling district council.

LABOUR party members, watching John Smith battle for one member, one vote, wonder if he intends to restore to constituency parties the right to choose their own parliamentary candidates.

Some constituencies had the temerity to pick candidates who were not approved by the bullyboy Kinnock-Hattersley axis. They were barred from standing and safe outsiders were parachuted into the area. The best-known cases are:

- The mining constituency of **Hemsworth**, where a miner who grew up in the area won more nominations than any other candidate but was replaced by a teacher, Derek Enright;
- **Wallasey**, where the most popular candidate was too left-wing and was replaced by Angela Eagle; **Vauxhall**, ditto, where Kate Hoey was moved in;
- **Birkenhead**, where the local party de-selected Frank Field, a right-winger, and was then forced to take him back;

Under OMOV, all such decisions of the Walworth Road politicos would presumably be reversed — to the delight of such a sturdy democrat as John Smith, ho, ho.

"But they can't challenge my leadership — I've never shown any"

A SURGE in Labour party membership applications from Birmingham's inner city wards has brought in the spooks from Labour's Walworth Road HQ to investigate.

The city has 39 wards and once had about 4,000 Labour members, with a maximum of a few hundred in any ward. Now there are 7,000 members, with 2,500 in just three wards: Nechells, Aston and Small Heath. Five years ago they totalled just 200 members.

These wards are part of the Small Heath constituency, stamping ground of Labour MP Roger Godsiff and soon to be merged with its neighbours by the Boundary Commission. Next year will see a new party and a new constituency choosing themselves a new MP, and if this month's Labour party conference goes as planned, there will be no union block votes to keep Mr Godsiff in power.

He and his main rival, city councillor Muhammad Afzal, have created recruiting machines that would be the envy of any US politician — hence the new members. Similar strange surges have appeared in Clare Short's Ladywood and Roy Hattersley's Sparkbrook constituencies, and parts of both could eventually be incorporated into the new constituency.

Walworth Road is showing signs of caution at this outburst of private enterprise-style competition. Too many applications have apparently arrived neatly wrapped together with similar handwriting. Party hacks have been told to check every one against the electoral roll — a laborious process which has become so unaccountably held up it may last until after the selection.

ESPIONAGE "expert" Nigel West, aka Tory MP Rupert Allason, has just published *The Faber Book of Espionage*, an anthology of pieces on his favourite subject, quoting mainly from published sources by ex-MI5 and ex-MI6 operatives.

The only person to refuse permission for a piece to be included in this anthology was the self-important John Le Carré, who insisted on having sight of West's introduction before he would agree. This claimed that before Le Carré (aka David Cornwell) joined MI6 he had been recruited as an MI5 nark while at Oxford and entrusted with the task of spying on university lefties.

OBN

ALLOW me, on behalf of The People's millions of readers, to be the first to congratulate you, ma'am, on your wonderful news.

I sincerely hope that the new addition to your family will make your happiness complete.

I was delighted when you married your dashing Commander just nine months ago. As a mother myself, I am delighted for you now as you start a second family. Your tireless charity work on behalf of the world's most unfortunate children has been an inspiration to all of us.

YOUR NEW CHILD WILL, I AM SURE, BRING YOU THE JOY YOU SO RICHLY DESERVE.

Robert Maxwell

THE EDITOR

Submitted by Ray Miles.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

GEORGE HOWARTH, chairman of the Tribune group of Labour MPs, has written a stiff letter to Peter Hain, the group's secretary, disowning a pamphlet Hain has written for fear that some people might think the socialist ideas it espouses came from the group.

The group had just been congratulating itself on the smooth way it censored Hain's first effort, when Hain wrote another, this time in his role as chairman of the *Tribune* newspaper.

It repeats the Spartery cut from the first pamphlet, as revealed by the *Eye* last month, but utters enough other heresies to send Howarth into shock.

It argues that Labour's modernisers and Clintonites are really SDP-ers in disguise, and that the party must engage the support of "extra-parliamentary forces to resist the financial, business, bureaucratic and technological elites". It must reform the City and the EC, end royal prerogative, insist that judges and top public servants be appointed by parliament and not by prime ministerial patronage, strip the monarchy of all constitutional powers, dis-establish the Church of England and pull out of Northern Ireland. Phew.

The trouble is that the Tribune group adopted the name "Tribune" when it consisted of lefties. It has since been captured by the right-wing Brown-Blair MPs, who infiltrated on behalf of Neil Kinnock thinking this a clever way to smother it. Now they are worried that some people might think that they are responsible for Hain.

The row is sure to raise its head at next month's Labour conference, which should be fun, and then go on rising. The Tribune group will need to find a new title: the anti-*Tribune* group, perhaps?

'Backbiter'

Asian Babe Special

I AM GREATLY looking forward to the Dirty Digger's bash at the V&A to celebrate Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill's 10 years as editor of the *Sunset Times*.

There is to be a "surprise", I gather, which vulgar speculation suggests will be a cake, out of which will burst the exotic and totally nude Pamela Bordes.

I certainly hope there'll be an opportunity for Andrew to strut his stuff with his new fashion accessory — the dusky escort with whom I saw him desporting himself at the Ministry of Sound the other night.

Neill's *Sunset Times* tells us ageing but sexually active white roués of London's demi-monde that a coloured girlfriend is now just as necessary as a prostate operation will be in a few years' time. In an amazingly racist article on the subject, it said: "Apart from a Rolex, what should every stylish gent have clinging to his wrist?" The answer? "An Asian babe".

Sunita Russell, paramour of Sir Terence Conran, boasted that dusky-complexioned creatures were seen as "exotic ornaments" by rich white men. "Being an ethnic girl serves as a passport to café society," she gushed. "Walking into a cocktail party on the arm of a notable man makes heads turn. *Café au lait* cleavage is somewhat more enticing than freckles and pearls."

Oddly the article failed to mention the case of another "notable" man in café society falling for an "ethnic girl". But then if Pamela *is* invited to the V&A she can remind everyone of how she once slashed the crotches of Neill's suits in a fit of rage.

BRILLO PAD'S role as an object of veneration, meanwhile, is acquiring epic proportions, I am afraid.

At a recent screening of a film about another dusky maiden — the Tina Turner biopic *What's Love Got To Do With It* (often very little, ho, ho) — there was a 45-minute delay while a major celeb made his way to the theatre.

There was a buzz of anticipation as hacks prepared for a glimpse of a major "star" such as Mick Jagger or Bono — and a major intake of breath as Brillo strode in.

A similar frisson was experienced at a press screening of *Dirty Weekend*, the latest film by Brillo's big chum, Michael Winner. At a crucial moment in the drama, up pops Neill as a TV newsreader. A cynical minority of the audience — and I emphasise that it was only a minority — were reduced to raucous laughter and uncontrolled vomiting.

● *WHILE on the subject of vomiting, a further titbit reaches me concerning Mr Winner, the oenologically-challenged director whose complaints about some posh plonk he had bought (see last Eye) revealed that he hadn't a clue how to drink it properly.*

Browsing through back issues of Decanter magazine, the winos' Bible, I read an article by Winner actually detailing his ignorance of anything to do with grapes.

Presumably it was this ignorance that landed him the job of restaurant critic on the Sunset Times. As his longtime (much younger) lover Jenny Seagrove will attest, Winner is clearly all mouth and no corkscrew.

STILL, some people seem to like him. Simon Slater, co-owner of the buzzy Notting Hill eaterie Kensington Place, not far from Winner's Holland Park home, was recently sent a questionnaire by a restaurant guide. In answer to the inquiry "What is the most unlikely request by a customer?" Slater did not hesitate. "A table next to Michael Winner, please" was his response.

SADLY at Sir Terence Conran's new Tower Bridge eaterie there will be empty tables when the stripped pine to brasserie magnate celebrates his 62nd birthday.

Two eminent former friends and admirers will definitely not be in attendance. They are lords Jacob Rothschild and Arnie Weinstock, who are still smarting from the loss of their massive (but little-publicised) investment in Conran's Butler's Wharf property development, which went bust.

I do hope Sunita, Conran's very own luscious Asian babe, can find some way to console him.

THE *Sunset Times* of course is not the only rag to have been pandering to the dusky maiden sex fantasies of white male suburban readers recently.

Nick Lloyd's *Daily Express* recently served up a slice of silliness about Anoja Dias, a Sri Lankan-born bimbo whom it claims is the new girlfriend of the excessively rich Marquess of Cholmondeley (tabloid trivia point: hitherto the marquess has been stepping out with comely chanteuse Lisa B).

Anoja, a Pamela-lookalike who was once the protégée of Andrew Neill (*Zzzzzz. Ed*) was said by Monday's *Express* to have enjoyed "romantic dates" with the marquess. "David has been taking me out to dinner," she apparently told the paper. "He has been showing some interest in me. Western men are attracted to the unknown, the mystery..."

This is total fantasy. La Dias has never once had dinner with "David", as she rather presumptuously calls him. Indeed, she does not even seem to know where he lives: on Monday morning, after the *Express* story appeared, she rang the Londoner's Diary on the *Evening Standard* to ask whether they could give her the marquess's telephone number!

THE *Sunset Times*'s concern for Asian babes seems to know no bounds. The paper recently carried the following advertisement: "If you are from an African, Asian or Caribbean background, the *Sunday Times* is offering a fellowship which will allow you to develop your skills as a journalist..." Applications from "Asian babes" who are prepared to be regarded as ornamental style accessories will, one assumes, be particularly welcome.

Pip Pip!

Pseuds Corner

As a young girl Emma Molesworth-St Aubyn pretended to fire cannons from the battlements of her cousin's seat, St Michael's Mount, Cornwall. Now, aged 22, she has set up a counter-terrorist consultancy.

Miss Molesworth-St Aubyn does not divulge her anti-bomb tactics — "I could tell you but I would have to kill you."

Daily Telegraph

Saturday morning swimming 30 lengths first thing, a ritual of repetition, each length a small journey with a beginning, a middle and an end, this emblem of a day from dawn to darkness, a story to be told over and over again. The hope and undertow of reluctance I feel every length as I launch myself off from the slimy tiled side with my head underwater is the same feeling I have when faced first thing in the morning with a blank sheet of paper.

ROSE BOYT
The Times

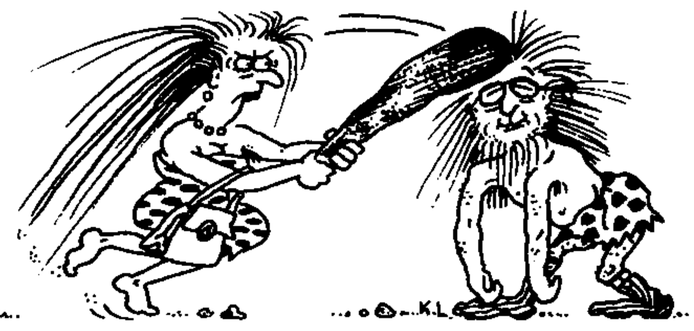
The arrival of Campaign every Thursday gives the same buzz as the arrival of the Sunday newspapers three days later: I feel a rush of blood to the fingertips and cannot decide where to start.

NICHOLAS COLERIDGE
Plug for Campaign's 25th anniversary

I am longing for some deferred blissful future time when the book is finished, a time that sometimes seems so distant I am paralysed by longing for it. I recognise in this paralysis the deadly nature of longing, that melancholy postponement of pleasure, a fantasy of return to a future of restitution, of that which is unattainable, that which is lost, a dream that does not recognise reality, time passing, beginnings and endings, and that is the subject matter of my book.

ROSE BOYT
The Times

***Bat Out Of Hell II* sits in no one time frame. If we could go back in time to when Henry the Eighth was writing Greensleeves and if we had the ability to play *Bat Out Of Hell II* to the toiling serfs and noble courtiers without half scaring them to death, they would understand it. They would get the idea. They would know about the emotions that all these**



songs are talking about. If a cavewoman hits her caveman over the head with her stone cudgel and tells him "sooner or later you'll start screwing around" then that's the same emotion through the ages, right!

MEATLOAF
Press release

I must salute the fine team who support me on Council and who work very hard in your interest and work many hours to further the aims and objectives of the Association — well done and a sincere thank you. — Terence J. Carter DrPhy Mp, DSCh, DBCh. FEChA. AMRSH, MICD. STN. President.

Chiropody Comment
(Journal of the English Chiropodists Association)

CONTRIBUTORS: E. Strobes, R. Pemberton, Jenny Boston, Everyone, Anon, A.Doctor.

£10 paid for entries

NOOKS and CORNERS

BOOM! ROAR! Crash! Ouch! So farewell then, Queen Elizabeth Square, Glasgow. What a way to go! Poor Sir Basil Spence: he is badly done by, both in life and in death.

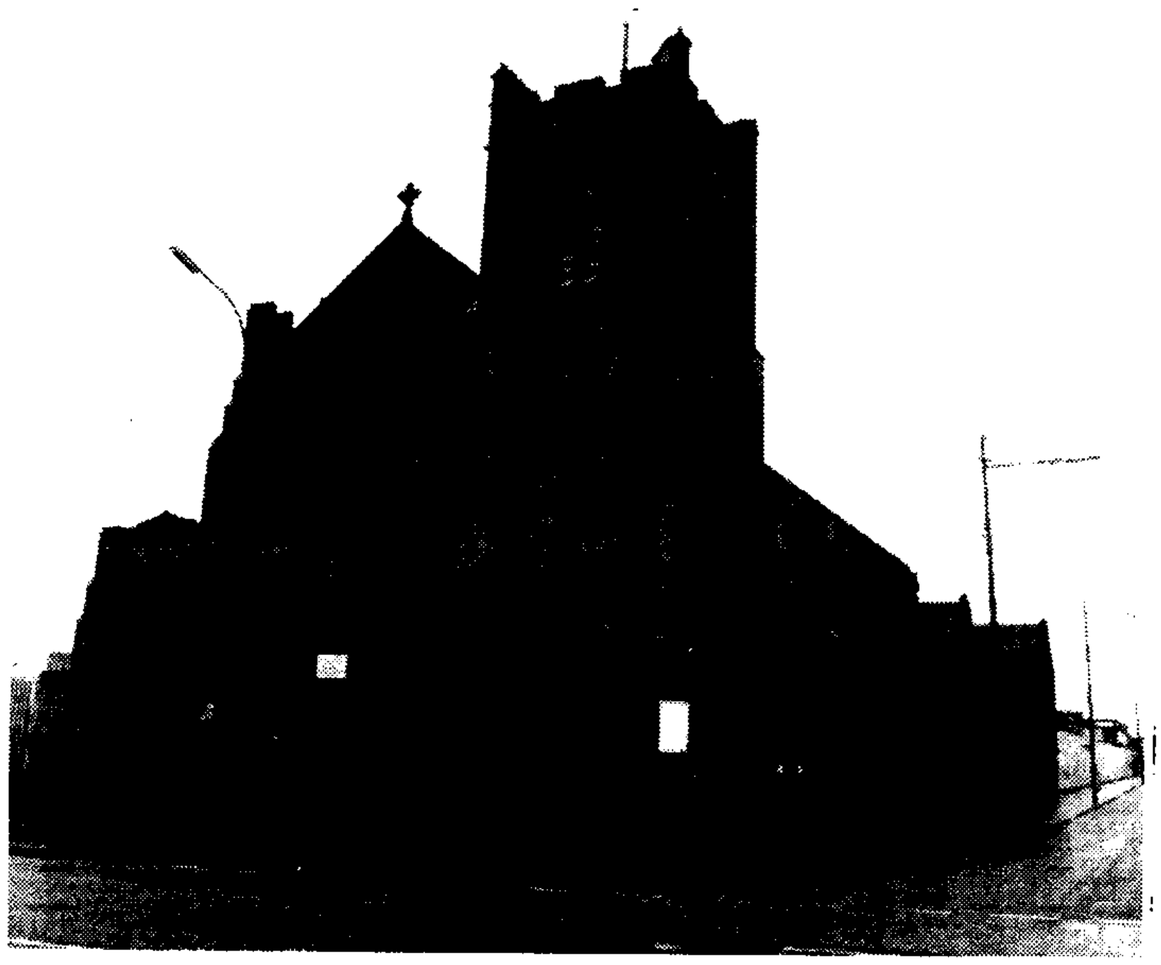
His last years were clouded by criticism of his design for the home office in Queen Anne's Gate, and he made a fool of himself by saying he had a knighthood and the OM: so how dare they? And now his largest building in his native Scotland has been blown to bits.

It is no consolation that all that misguided Utopian effort perished in about 10 seconds in the biggest implosion ever staged in Europe. And then insult was added to injury by the demolition contractors — chosen by the city of Glasgow because they were the cheapest — who failed to get the whole building down, despite killing one and injuring four in the process.

So Glasgow loses the only interesting high-rise block on the skyline. All the rest are banal, worthless shoeboxes. Yet instead of dynamiting a few of those, the city deliberately chose brutally to eliminate the one development designed by Scotland's most eminent modern architect, the designer of Coventry cathedral, and which was opened by the Queen herself a mere three decades ago.

Why? Because, I think, the "Queenies" were selected as the best sacrificial victim to atone for the great crime of wiping out the Gorbals — acres of stone tenements which could and should have been rehabilitated — in the first place. But I don't suppose that will assuage the troubled spirit of poor Sir Basil.

AND I DON'T suppose many of my indulgent readers will shed a tear for Hutchesontown 'C', especially as My Lord Palumbo appealed in vain to the secretary of state for Scotland for a stay of execution. But you might for the Macgregor Memorial Church in Crossloan Road in Govan, for it is also soon to disappear — not by explosives installed by Messrs Ladkarn-Wreckers, but by mere ball and chain.



A kind Glasgow reader sends me a picture of it. Built in 1902-04 by a shipbuilding family in memory of Margaret Macgregor, a local church and social worker, it is a handsome red sandstone Gothic pile with fashionable art nouveau touches culled from the work of the best English Gothicists.

It was the work of the architect James Miller — no mean figure, for he designed the great Glasgow Exhibition of 1901 as well as lots of fine buildings in the city centre. This church is listed, but supine Historic Scotland seems to care little for it and now Glasgow's planning committee has given planning permission for demolition.

Why? The building is not redundant: a congregation still worships in it. Yes, there is the usual decay and rot caused by years of poor maintenance, but the structure is, in fact, very well built and of the best materials. No proper estimate for repairs has been carried out and emergency repairs to the roof will probably not cost more than £1,000. No attempt has been made to find an alternative use for it, and Govan Initiative has not been consulted about possibilities of using the building for business development.

So why is it going? Because the adjoining site is owned by Messrs Turner & Co, an engineering, plant hire and car rental company who want to buy the site for expansion. And so the Church of Scotland has taken their money and run. The congregation? Oh they can go elsewhere. And what does the purchaser want do with the building? Demolish it and level the site for a car park. ACARPARK.

The wicked frivolity of this is breathtaking. Like the Gorbals, Govan is a deeply depressed part of Glasgow, not over-endowed with fine buildings to give coherence and dignity to this urban desert and to give a little uplift to its denizens. Yet a fine church building is to be sacrificed for yet another desolate open space for cars. So much for the pastoral conscience of the Church of Scotland. Who cares what poor old Margaret Macgregor worked for; who cares about Govan?

Words fail me. No they don't: Glasgow, City of Culture, is run for the benefit of road traffic; nothing else. And if the poor people of Govan, and the Gorbals, don't like it, they can lump it. At least Sir Basil's "Queenies" were not torn down for a car park; or so they tell us. We shall see.

'Piloti'

RAIL NEWS

IT IS STILL a safe bet that the most money to be made out of rail privatisation will be that earned by the consultants who have already had six years with their noses in the trough.

The biggest jackpot has gone to Price Waterhouse, whose director, Sir Facing-both-ways Christopher Foster, is John MacGregor's privatisation adviser, while his colleagues work for British Rail.

The PW report on how track costs should be charged was recently delivered, only a year late. It argued that more work should be done before PW can come up with any positive answers. Although this sounded like effrontery to his officials, "Brunel" MacGregor was undeterred. Still hoping to press on with his railways (destruction) bill in more or less its original form, he is relying on bribery.

BR managers are being offered every inducement to give up their jobs and bid for the franchises which have so dismally failed to excite the interest of the private sector. Instead of shooting the BR chief executive, "Admiral" John Wellsby, MacGregor has doubled his salary, *pour encourager les autres* to jump overboard where, he urges, they will be able to treble, or even quadruple, their salaries.

They are also being told, when Robert "Gillette" Horton or Railtrack is out of earshot, that they can even have their own track and signalling if only they help MacGregor out of his hole. So far, they have remained singularly unimpressed. How, they want to know, can the Tories bind their Labour successors to honour the 20-year franchise deals the City is demanding, when all of them will involve large payments of government subsidy?

Whatever Labour's attitude to other privatisations, the daft Tory rail sell-off is sure to be reversed as soon as the government is defeated.

BRITISH RAIL is entering into the warped spirit of privatisation with its latest promotion.

On the face of it, giving InterCity travel vouchers away with purchases at Shell petrol stations is a good way to introduce modern rail travel to car addicts. But the small print says the vouchers can only be used for InterCity journeys — not those involving Regional Railways or Network SouthEast.

To use the vouchers people must have an intimate knowledge of BR's internal business divisions, which are not always obvious. The vouchers are not valid for a Newcastle to Liverpool journey, for instance, even though the route connects several of Britain's largest cities and could reasonably be assumed to be an "inter-city" journey. BR finds it more convenient to run the service through Regional Railways than through InterCity.

The division of the national rail network so that tickets are not universally valid is one of the great problems privatisation will bring. Clearly InterCity has felt the urge to launch this fiasco prematurely while the network is still controlled by one body, despite the obvious success of its recent promotions through Boots — which were valid on all BR passenger businesses.

The upshot of InterCity's blinkered attitude is that confirmed motorists who decide to brave the hassles of rail travel will be baffled and angered at being refused bargain travel — and will get back in their cars and stay in them.

"You know what our trouble is — too many artists and not enough scientists!"

TVE

The Times World Chess Championship

——(Channel 4/BBC2)——

HISTORY has shown that most of western civilisation's greatest disasters were deemed by someone in authority to be a good idea at the time. The Crusades. The Napoleonic Wars. The appointment of John Birt as director-general of the BBC...

Only in hindsight does the sheer folly of the decision become apparent, by which time, of course, it's too late. The Crusades lasted 175 years, on and off. **The Times World Chess Championship** should last a maximum of eight weeks. Go on — which would *you* choose?

So, the **Times World Chess Championship** rolls on, dominating television airtime with all the random cruelty of an international bowls tournament. At Channel 4, executives are no doubt scurrying round denying all responsibility, and saying how they always thought it would be a bit of a risk, why not quietly forget it, we'll just replace it with *Mork and Mindy*, no one would notice, etc. Ah, but they would. This is no *Year in Provence*, from which viewers merely recoiled in brown-trousered horror. This is genuine cult stuff. Some people won't miss a minute of it. This is one they want to tell their grandchildren about. This is one they won't ever forget.

The scale of the disaster is apparent even from the opening credits, in which perverts with beards disport themselves in suits of armour to no apparent purpose. What is going on? The determination to make chess exciting, it seems, has overcome all good sense.

When we cut instantly to Carol Vorderman and her tame coterie of chess nerds, a rather more realistic view of the event is presented. Instantly, the atmosphere of the school chess club is conjured up, with its low reliance on personal hygiene and absolute reliance on very thick glasses. This is not the stuff of mass audience television. In fact, as has now been established, it's not the stuff of any sort of television.

For Miss Vorderman, it's hard to feel anything but great sympathy. Forever tagged as "brainy" (thanks to the high-speed mental arithmetic she practises every day on *Countdown*), she has been lumbered with the full eight-week presenting stint and must now be wondering whether she'll have any career to go back to when it's over. Already her standard expression of blind terror has been dulled by resignation: after this, you suspect, even *Notes and Queries with Clive Anderson* will seem like fun.

Meanwhile, as Keeper of the Nerds, she must both jolly up her boys and occasionally force them into saying something interesting — or, when that's too much to hope for, something vaguely intelligible. Unfortunately, the rarefied nature of Short's and Kasparov's thinking processes have frequently been beyond the expertise of the Nerds, as have anything but the most rudimentary powers of communication.

Even more crucially — and this may come as a shock to a few commissioning editors at Channel 4 — the rhythms of chess turn out not to be those of an all-action high-speed spectator sport after all. On Thursday, Couch Potato was watching the afternoon shift when suddenly, without any warning, he woke up. Forty minutes had passed, during which only one move had been made. Short had gone off for a little walk. The Nerds were reduced to describing the way Kasparov massaged his earlobes to help him think.

In their desperation, Channel 4 has even tried slow motion replays, which is either a slightly surreal post-modernist comment on it all, or very sad indeed. At least BBC2's spoiler coverage hasn't sunk quite that low, but then it has the enormous advantage of not being able to show any of the action.

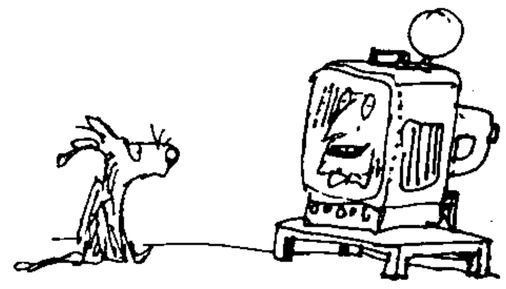
Instead we have had Peter Snow, whose unquenchable enthusiasm is just what is needed to enliven such a disappointing contest, as well as the joyous sight of TV's Dominic Lawson hanging around the Savoy Theatre like an ageing groupie. Once a widely respected and esteemed figure, loved if not carnally desired by all who knew him, the editor of the *Spectator* has now re-emerged in public life with the somewhat reduced status of "Nigel's Chum".

But then quite a few people will come out of this debacle looking foolish — media CVs of the future can be expected to contain no mention of it all. Pawn to queen 4...

'Couch Potato'

"I'm bored with repeats. Let's go up West and see a show!"

MEDIA NEWS



WHERE Robert Maxwell — friend of despots everywhere — led, Rupert Murdoch follows.

Readers will recall the deal the Fat Man struck with the Chinese government to produce the *Beijing Daily*, a propaganda rag. Now the Digger has sold a controlling stake in Hong Kong's *South China Morning Post* to a front man for the Beijing regime.

News Corp retains a big minority stake in the paper, which currently supports moves to improve the pathetic level of democracy in the colony before Britain's pull-out in 1997. This stance is unlikely to remain a feature of the *Post* when Murdoch completes the share sale to his new partner Robert Kouk, a Communist surrogate funded by the Bank of China.

Murdoch will use the roughly £250 million proceeds to finance his takeover of another Hong Kong based venture: the STAR satellite TV network, whose footprint covers most of China. Its current liberal emphasis has not always gone down well in Beijing, and the Deng dictatorship will be watching whether Murdoch continues to broadcast BBC World Service TV News, with its unfortunate emphasis on freedom of speech.

No doubt, any move to replace the BBC with more sympathetic bulletins will be subjected to the fullest possible examination by the *Times*, *Today*, Sky News, etc.

SOCCER FANS who don't want to pay massive fee increases demanded by Sky should locate the German DSF channel on their satellite tuners. They can watch as much Premier League coverage as they want (or can stand) free of charge.

This unadvertised service is available thanks to Sky's attempts to cut costs by selling its materials to foreign networks. Despite the barrage of propaganda (or "news stories" as Andrew Neill would put it) in Murdoch papers, dish owners retain free access to channels from the Astra satellite like MTV, Cable News Network and Sky News.

The latter's unscrambled status is particularly dismaying to Murdoch: apart from being pisspoor, it scores massive losses and low viewing figures. Competition from CNN, however, makes it impossible for Sky to abuse its monopoly control over the Videocrypt system and add the Selina Scott-driven service to its multi-channel package. Viacom, the American giant which owns MTV, is also big enough to refuse to accept Murdoch's terms for subscription collection.

So why does the BBC, which has cravenly surrendered dominance over live football to its satellite "competitor", allow UK Gold to join the Sky line-up? Surely the Beeb should also refuse to accept the low profit margins resulting from being bundled into a multichannel package. Is John Birt so obsessed with the BBC Select project (which also depends on Sky's scrambling system) that commercial logic doesn't apply?

CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
"WHAT'S UP VIEWERS?"
BAR
"IT'S JUST A PLUG FOR YOUR DREADFUL BOOK...
Kenneth Baker's Memoirs
A WASTE OF LICENCE PAYER'S MONEY...
AND WE CAN'T THINK OF ANY REASON WHY IT WAS MADE?"
"HAVE YOU GOT TO THE BIT WHERE I GIVE MARMADUKE HUSSEY A SECOND TERM AS CHAIRMAN OF THE BBC?"
TOILET
HOME SECRETARY
"For old time's sake!"
"Trebles and slugs all round!"
Ken Pyne

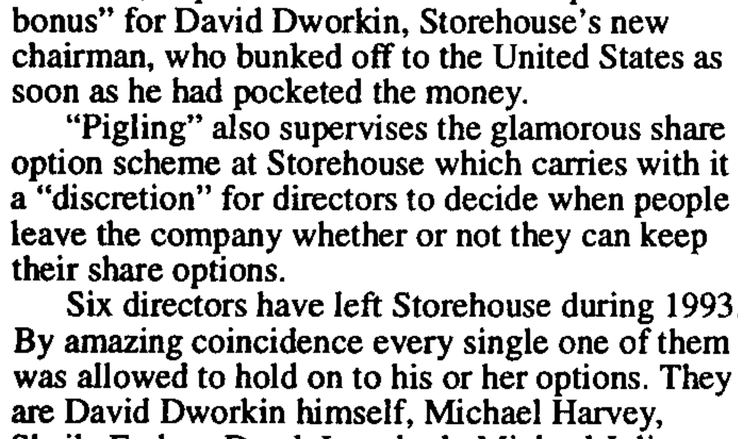
ADMIRERS of Sir Christopher "Pigling" Bland, the chairman of London Weekend Television who gets his nickname from the enormous £9 million share options trough in which he guzzles, have been quick to point out that "Pigling" is keen that chums and colleagues in business should benefit in the same way.

"Pigling" was a member of the "remuneration" (lolly for the boys and girls) committee at the Mothercare-to-Habitat stores group, Storehouse. The committee approved huge handouts to directors, in particular a £2.7 million "performance bonus" for David Dworkin, Storehouse's new chairman, who bunked off to the United States as soon as he had pocketed the money.

"Pigling" also supervises the glamorous share option scheme at Storehouse which carries with it a "discretion" for directors to decide when people leave the company whether or not they can keep their share options.

Six directors have left Storehouse during 1993. By amazing coincidence every single one of them was allowed to hold on to his or her options. They are David Dworkin himself, Michael Harvey, Sheila Forbes, Derek Lovelock, Michael Julien and David Simons. Between them they have kept their 2,838,545 share options.

But no one should run away with the idea that the directors have used their discretion recklessly. The vast majority of non-executives who were booted out of Storehouse, and who begged to keep their share options, were turned down. One or two of them were lectured about the economic crisis in which the company was plunged — and the "firm hand" which the chancellor of the exchequer was wielding to keep down the pay of anyone who lives on the poverty line.



HOW THEY ARE RELATED

● Simon Heffer has argued in his *Evening Standard* political notebook that at the local elections for London boroughs in eight months' time "few local issues should be as important as the brainless decision by the Radio Authority to close down LBC, the best local radio station in Britain... London's Tory councils should announce their commitment to fight the closure, or else face oblivion."

Hefferlump failed to point out that he is a regular guest on the Friday news review, part of the Richard Littlejohn show,

● BBC1's *Question Time* has a new producer in the shape of Prue Keeley. No doubt this was an unavoidable coincidence, but one of the guests on her inaugural edition was none other than her husband, CBI chief Howard Davies.

MORE AWARDS — yes, it's the STEvies: the Pace Satellite TV Europe Programme Awards.

As if BAFTA and the Royal Television Society weren't enough to contend with, the worthies of the satellite TV establishment have decided to produce their own annual orgy of self-congratulation, which could be seen last Sunday night on Sky One.

This included categories for most popular TV soap, most popular children's programme (0-11 years) and most popular teenage programme. As the press release blandly though revealingly explains: "Readers of *Satellite TV Europe Magazine* and *The Sun* have voted for their favourite TV shows and personalities and consequently several Sky programmes have been nominated in the 12 categories."

HACKWATCH No 46: Sir Clement Food

SINCE dropping its price to tabloid level a fortnight ago, *The Times* has gained almost 100,000 new readers — many from the *Mail* and *Express*.

As these mid-market immigrants desperately search their new-found land for familiar landmarks, they will no doubt be reassured to find a regular column on the sports pages by Sir Clement Freud, the *Just a Minute* panellist, former Liberal MP and sometime dog-food salesman.

But their pleasure may swiftly turn to puzzlement. For although "Freud on Friday" is supposed to be about sporting events, its attention constantly wanders to the more pressing matter of where his next meal is coming from. Thus:

9 April: Visits the annual "Father and Son" golf tournament at Brookwood, Surrey. "A dram would have been a help," he writes, but "a dram is not forthcoming." Instead, hard-boiled eggs are offered for breakfast. Later, the players "eschewed the chance of tea and cake at the refreshment hut at the 12th green (not me)".

16 April: Spends a day at Hove watching Sussex play cricket. "At the pavilion, they are unveiling the buffet," but it is sadly unappetising: "Ham and egg pie. Sausage rolls. Quiche, vol-au-vents, sandwiches."

30 April: Culinary gloom reappears, this time at the World Snooker Championships in Sheffield. "We in the auditorium are not allowed to eat or drink," he complains. Things go from bad to worse in the evening, when he dines at Mama's Pizzeria with Steve Davis. "I suggested that we have some vin rosé. Davis said he would rather have a Budweiser. I ordered two Budweisers and when they came, they were lukewarm; I asked the waitress if we might have cold beer, like from cans that had been in the refrigerator or anywhere outside the kitchen... As Mama's listed a hot fudge cake on their dessert menu, this being subheaded 'Best Bet', we decided to have one each. They were all right."

7 May: To Berkshire, for the British Real Tennis Championship. "At the Holyport Club, annual sub £275, there is a bar and I am given tea; I buy a packet of Walkers potato crisps, could have bought a Kit Kat; at luncheon the bar promises chicken curry."

14 May: "The invitation was for luncheon, then a seat at the first-round match for the Prince of Wales Trophy at the Royal County of Berkshire Polo Club." As usual, Freud seems more interested in the nosh than the game. "Lunch was just the sort of pleasant meal that you would expect from nicely-brought-up Basingstoke outside catering ladies: cold beef, avocado salads, new potatoes... then pavlova."

21 May: Freud drives to Woughton on the Green, Bucks, to witness a baseball training session — but, as so often, comes home disappointed. "The hamlet also has a pub called Ye Olde Swan. I was going to get a sandwich until I saw the sign Fine Fayre served."

28 May: Watching the first day of a three-day equestrian event at Windsor, Freud concludes that dressage is "dull sport unless you are immensely knowledgeable, have an elevated seat and have brought a hip flask". He wishes he had come the next day, for the cross-country contest, when he could have enjoyed "home-made fudge" and "bacon sandwiches".

4 June: Freud travels to the Sussex Downs, to watch cyclists ride past in the Milk Race. "Having purchased an 80p soft ice-cream cone from a Mr Whippy van, I sucked it on the way down." After observing the race for a few minutes, Freud heads for the Bull, a nearby hostelry recommended by the *Good Pub Guide*. "They had run out of beer, so we had cider; behind us a woman ordered fish, but they had also run out of fish."

11 June: Will this man never get a square meal? Apparently not. Visiting a bullring in the Algarve, Freud finds that "in Portugal there appears to be no bullfight food: beer and Diet Seven-Up is about the extent of it — with bread and sausage if you are prepared to wait."

18 June: A one-man show at the Mermaid Theatre about Muhammad Ali reminds Freud of a lunch he had with the great boxer in 1965. "He ate tomato soup and steak with ketchup."

2 July: Henley Royal Regatta, Freud discovers, is quite enjoyable "provided you have a parking place, a bootful of champagne on ice, quails' eggs with celery, pepper and bowls of summer pudding with Cornish cream." He, alas, did not have any of these.

30 July: Belatedly catches up with Wimbledon. In a hamburger van near the All England Club, "a man in a white jacket — though not with his name embroidered thereon like chefs Blanc, of Oxford, and White, of Wandsworth — was activating a sizeable pile of frying onions on the griddle; to one side of the onions lay the hamburgers, requiring only a few seconds to get warm enough to sell. Jumbo (4oz) sausages were stacked behind the onions; bacon was off...

6 August: Cowes week is the occasion for another gripping chapter from Freud's past: "On my first visit to Cowes — many years ago — I arrived at Waterloo station in good time for my train, approached an automatic vending machine, put two shillings in the slot and pressed the 'egg salad sandwich' button."

27 August: At last there is some good news for Freud's rumbling stomach when he visits a man who breeds racing pigeons. "He says the best food around is seven miles away at Barr. We go there and find sensational steak pie baked beneath a home-made puff pastry crust."

10 September: Freud meets Pauline Smith, a tenpin bowling champion, at a bowling alley in Tolworth. "The snack bar sells chicken nuggets, benign, with a startlingly crisp cover offering a consistently dull taste time after time." Just like the "Freud on Friday" column, you might say.

TWO INTERNAL reports circulating at TV Centre suggest that "Birtism" may finally be in retreat.

The first was commissioned by outside consultants to find out what viewers think of the *Six O'Clock* and *Nine O'Clock* news programmes. To no one's surprise but their own, it revealed that most people spend a short time watching the incomprehensible reports before lunging for their channel zappers.

The second report was prepared by a committee of BBC hacks, including Chris "the Brute" Cramer, head of "news gathering". It concluded that "accessibility" is now the watchword — in marked contrast to Birt's "mission to explain", which is responsible for bringing such turgid telly into the nation's sitting rooms.

When asked by an innocent from radio if this meant the BBC had got it wrong over the past few years, Cramer explained: "Not at all. We're simply building on those values."

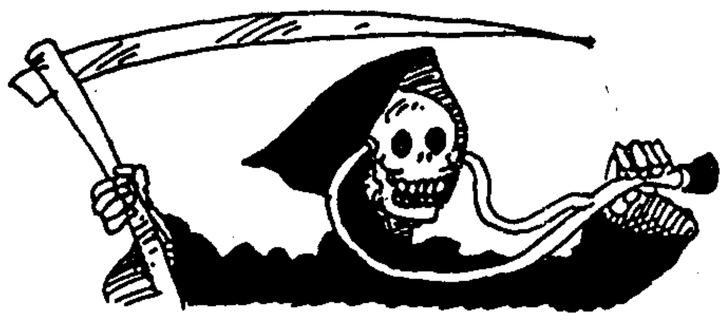
Whatever the reason, *Panorama* suddenly produced a real investigative programme on Terry Venables: no Birtian analysis but a good story.

NOTICEBOARD

Moonlight (Almeida)

"... it plays for 75 minutes..."
Michael Coveney, Observer
"... about 75 minutes..."
Clive Hirschhorn, Sunday Express
—o—
"... nearer 85 minutes than 75..."
Malcolm Rutherford, Financial Times
"... only 80 minutes..."
Maureen Paton, Daily Express

LUVVIES ARE RESTING



DOING THE ROUNDS

FOLLOWING the huge scandal over dodgy cancer diagnoses for 2,000 patients in the West Midlands, bosses of the South Birmingham health authority have been gagged by chairman Bryan Stoten.

Stoten said all interviews with the press would now go through him. But is this the same Bryan Stoten who from the mid-1970s to late 1980s was a leading campaigner on the left for more accountability inside the NHS, attacking the power of the management and consultants, etc? Er, yes it seems it is.

● SIR Robin Buchanan has at last resigned as chairman of much-troubled **Wessex regional health authority** (*Eyes passim*) but has been reappointed chairman of the much-troubled NHS Supplies Authority for a further two years.

● THE **Royal Surrey County trust** in **Guildford** is £2 million in debt, rationing admissions, shedding staff through early retirement and leaving vacancies unfilled. The hospital's debts partly arose from treating 3,000 more patients last year than it has been paid for. It is now offering patients a £250 reward for ideas which raise or save at least £1,000. Meanwhile **Grimsby NHS trust** has announced 55 compulsory redundancies, including 41 nurses, as part of its £2 million savings plan. And student nurses at **Portsmouth's Queen Alexandra hospital** are to have their rent tripled by 1994.

● **LONDON'S University College** and **Middlesex hospitals** have cancelled non-urgent operations until April 1994 and the **Royal London**, the **Royal Orthopaedic** and the **Royal National Ear, Nose and Throat hospitals** are postponing them for two months. **St Peter's hospital** in **Chertsey** is limiting gynaecological operations on patients of non-fundholding GPs to just six a week, and **Birmingham's Good Hope hospital** is offering elective surgery to patients of fundholding GPs only.

● A QUARTER of the 292 NHS trusts have decided to take up Norwich Union's private Trust Care patient plan (*Eye* 828), which offers private treatment in NHS hospitals for 25 percent less than in competing private hospitals.

● THE 200 psychiatric patients at the **Mid-Wales hospital** in **Talgarth** will soon be deprived of on-site catering. **Powys health authority** has decided to centralise catering at **Bronllys geriatric hospital** and send meals by road to the Mid-Wales. Unfortunately the roads are often blocked by snow in the winter and tourists in the summer. Meanwhile Mid-Wales catering manager Terry Rees, who has been serving institutionalised food for 31 years, has been given a new job. Laundry manager.

● *HEALTH VIEW* is a glossy government-sponsored freebie sent to NHS workers in **Yorkshire** to tell them just how well the reforms are working. An idea of its priorities can be gleaned from the July issue, which devotes five of its first 16 pages to a special report on new cars, such as the Citroen Xanita and the Rover 600. No mention is given to the new Clarendon wing of the **Leeds general infirmary NHS trust**, which has run into financial difficulties. Patient complaints have focused on a lack of ward hygiene, missed meals for those on special diets, sporadic linen changes and morning urine bottles not collected until tea-time.

● MRS P. WHITE, director of contracts and marketing at **Oxford's John Radcliffe hospital,** has been sending out an expensively produced Oxfordshire Directory for GPs. One practice of eight GPs received eight such packages when one would have been more than adequate. With each came a promotional leaflet advertising Eagle Star pension schemes. Eagle Star is owned by British American Tobacco. Perhaps not the best sponsor for the project.

● LAST YEAR, the **Princess of Wales RAF hospital** in **Ely** was closed. With it went a newly built operating wing costing several million pounds. **Cambridge health authority** has since transferred a few geriatric patients and out-patient clinics there, but has allowed most of the hospital to run down. Patients in Ely now face a two-hour bus ride to get to the nearest casualty department at **Adenbrooke's** in **Cambridge**. Last month, the MOD announced it was looking for a site for a new service hospital in East Anglia. Unfortunately, Ely hospital is now too run down to be reopened.

M.D.

THE ROW about dirty tricks used by BUPA against its competitors has unfortunate echoes for its chief executive, Peter Jacobs.

Under Jacobs' reign, BUPA is accused of trying to put its chief rival in private medical insurance, Firstchoice Health, out of business.

Interestingly, one of Jacobs' most prominent previous jobs was as chief executive of British Sugar. In 1988 Jacobs had to pay a £1.9 million fine to the EEC because his company tried to crush a rival outfit called Napier Brown.

British Sugar is currently in front of the restrictive practices court for price fixing with Tate & Lyle. The allegations concern almost the entire time Jacobs was the firm's chief executive.

THE madness of transport secretary John MacGregor's joke plan to switch freight from road to rail — by allowing 44 tonne lorries to join the 30-tonners already careering around Britain — will not be lost on the people of Sowerby Bridge, West Yorkshire.

They are still in shock from the accident earlier this month in which a 30-tonne lorry ran out of control and ploughed a van into a row of shops and houses, killing six people.

Seeing the trail of destruction, eyewitnesses can only now shudder at the potential danger posed by the new 44-tonne lorries, which nice Mr MacGregor legalised in August.

ENERGY NEWS

UNDERLYING the battle over the future of Thorp, and whether or not the thermal oxide reprocessing plant at Sellafield will ever open, is a report on the project's finances by City accountants Touche Ross.

British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) insists on keeping the report secret, but nobody keeps good news secret. It says secrecy is needed for reasons of commercial confidentiality as the French company COGEMA is a rival for the reprocessing business. But given the intimate world of nuclear reprocessing, with only two companies in the business, and the small number of customers, it is doubtful if there are any secrets.

Indeed, the argument has even been demolished by BNFL itself, which has revealed the one figure it might wish to keep from a potential competitor: the claim that Britain would lose £900 million from overseas customers if the plant did not operate, after taking into account THORP's running costs. The figure was disclosed by David Bonser, the director of Thorp, and it enables COGEMA to calculate all it needs to know.

So what figures could BNFL be keeping secret? There is a belief in energy circles that the Touche Ross report shows that the loss from delaying the start-up would not be £2 million a week, as stated by chairman John Guinness, but only £250,000. This is pin money for the nuclear industry, and it was the figure of £2 million which persuaded the high court to allow BNFL to start testing the plant.

The Touche Ross report is starting to play the same role as a similar document, a report by Price Waterhouse, into the Central Electricity Generating Board's costs. That, too, was commissioned by the utility itself; that, too, was kept secret because it showed nuclear electricity was far more expensive than claimed.

There is now a fear that the government, facing opposition from the US and Ireland as well as domestically, may hurriedly give permission for Thorp to start up on 4 October, the date when the period of artificial "consultation", carried out in private by the civil service, ends and before parliament resumes 10 days later. The "consultation" was opened in July, just after parliament rose for the summer recess.

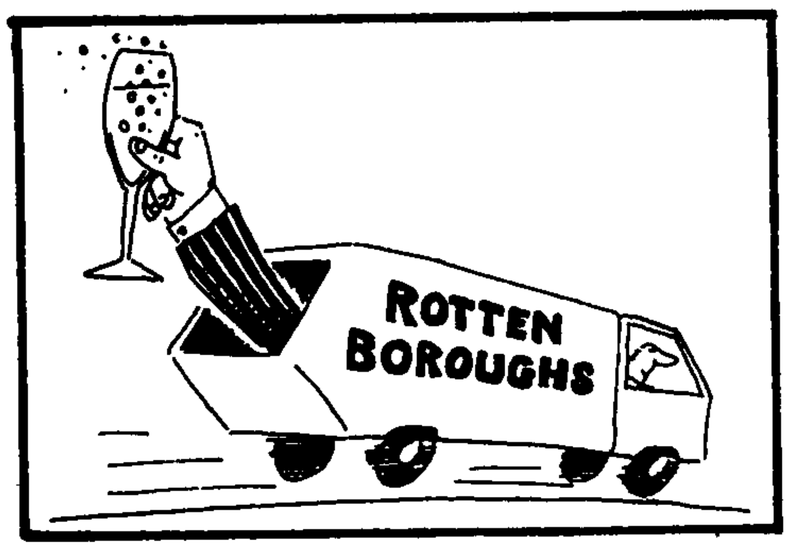
The government has received an unprecedented 58,000 letters calling for a public inquiry.

THE "independent" office of electricity regulation (Offer) is to have a new deputy director — so the government can keep its finger on the jugular.

The purpose is to ensure that the current director, Professor Stephen Littlechild, does nothing to interfere with the ability of National Power and PowerGen, the privatised electricity generating duopoly, to make huge profits. The government wants a handsome return for the treasury when the remaining 40 percent of the shares are privatised.

The worry is that Littlechild might, in a fit of morality, refer the generators to the monopolies commission and send the stock exchange into a tizzy. Thus it is that Peter Carter, formerly in charge of energy policy, coal and gas at the old department of energy, is to replace the gorgeous, pouting Ms Penny Boys as deputy director of Offer.

She, meanwhile, is returning to the department of trade and industry as head of personnel. All very independent indeed.



TRAFFORD

ENGINEERING firm AMEC, quick to capitalise on Manchester's Olympic bid, is now stepping up its bid for northern supremacy.

Last year it was selected to build Manchester's planned Olympic stadium, for which it cleverly appointed the world's greatest living architect, Sir Norman Foster, to draw up the plans. AMEC was also the major contractor in building Manchester Airport's much-maligned new terminal, and is now building the city's velodrome, Britain's first cycling stadium.

Recently attention shifted to land near Manchester Airport, in Trafford borough, which has become the target for potentially lucrative planning proposals in line with the airport's growing international status. Here, again, AMEC has not been idle.

The company owns, or holds options, on a 240-acre green belt site near the airport, where one million square feet of office space is planned. In fact, AMEC is so keen on the development it has even given presentations to local schools on the benefits of new jobs that could be created.

A bridge over the motorway currently unsuitable for heavy vehicles but which could link the offices with the rest of the world was closed last year for up-grading. Normal statutory notices were waived. The £142,000 contract for the bridgework was won by... AMEC.

Having won the bridge contract the local transport authority immediately unveiled its new Metrolink tram line which will bypass the densely-populated nearby Wythenshawe estate en route for Manchester Airport across the soon-to-be-strengthened bridge. AMEC is a major shareholder in the Metrolink company.

Understandably, South Manchester residents, worried about AMEC's grip on Trafford council, have lodged a complaint with the ombudsman about Tory councillors who have been lobbying for AMEC's proposals on the grounds that if they don't go ahead "Manchester Airport will grab the land and build something far worse on it".

Interestingly, the airport's own *Strategy To 2005* document makes no plans for the land.

BIRMINGHAM

THE will of Allah has prevailed at Birmingham's Springfield junior school where the governors have appointed a head who has never had paid teaching experience and who managed to "lose" £32,000 of public money in her last city job.

Noshaba Hussain beat 19 other applicants to be appointed head — thanks to the machinations of the chairman of the governors, Mohammed Yussouf. Mrs Hussain was appointed to the £28,000-a-year post despite having never having held a paid teaching job in a primary school since she qualified as a teacher in 1977.

She worked as a volunteer in Yarborough high school, Lincoln, and with Nottinghamshire multicultural services from 1977-78 before becoming a college lecturer for six years. A spell at the Commission for Racial Equality was followed by her arrival in Birmingham as managing director of a Muslim women's training agency.

The Muslim Women's Training Centre was funded to the tune of £80,000 by Birmingham city council — until tens of thousands of pounds mysteriously disappeared. The centre had a further £15,000 from the Cadbury Trust — of which £5,000 also disappeared — straight into Hussain's personal account. Even Birmingham's notoriously profligate leaders could not ignore such disappearances, and they sent in an audit team whose report, obtained by the *Eye*, makes startling reading.

It says Hussain lied on "numerous instances" to the auditors, illicitly tried to get her husband made a co-signatory of cheques without the approval of other directors, spent £32,000 from the current account on unauthorised purposes and failed to pay staff their full salaries. It details five breaches of the Companies Act 1985 — pointing out also that Mrs Hussain's degree had been in law.

On the verge of discovery she wrote to four directors appointed by the city council and also employed by it in other departments, demanding their resignation. They refused and called in the audit team. The reported added that financial management of the centre was "totally inadequate" and said that it closed with massive debts. Details were passed to police but the accounts were in such bad order with so few documents to prove anything that the investigation got nowhere.

How can the Springfield governors have appointed someone with such a past to run a school — against all the advice of Birmingham education department who have objected furiously — and despite applications from so many other highly-qualified people?

It is of course purely coincidental that Yussouf and Hussain have strong links to the self-styled Muslim parliament, whose agenda includes demands for establishing Muslim-only segregated schools.

LAMBETH

LOONY Lambeth has found an ingenious way to exacerbate crime on the mean streets of south London.

After windows and locks for new patio doors were fitted to 250 homes on a certain Brixton housing estate, one locked-out resident discovered *that the same key fitted every new door.*

The concerned resident immediately phoned the council with the alarming news, only to be told that uniform locks had been fitted deliberately — to save money and to allow careless residents to acquire replacement keys easily, should they lose their original set.

This logic helps to explain how Lambeth has managed to let some £20 million of public money slip through its fingers.

LEEDS

PEOPLE still waiting for help from Leeds social services who are told that the department is short of money, will be interested to learn that the city has spent £1 million on a computer system that doesn't work.

The system was ordered two years ago to link 600 administrative and field staff in a network of 200 terminals throughout the city — supposedly giving instant access to the records of thousands of clients.

It now turns out that if more than 90 staff use the terminals at the same time, the whole system crashes. It is a "criminal waste of money", according to the union UNISON, which says that the £1 million would have been better spent on more home helps and the like, not "glamour" objects like shiny new computers.

POLICE 5

MURKEYSIDE police suffer the highest rate of absenteeism through illness and injury of any force in the country, and police authority chairman George Bundred now wants the knackers to find ways to cut the £3 million a year this costs the taxpayer.

One solution might be to ban the coppers from taking part in strenuous sporting events. At the end of July, for instance, chief superintendent Bassinder and superintendent Dawber, of Merseyside "C" division, both competed in the police clay pigeon shooting championships in the Midlands.

On the very next day Bassinder saw a police doctor and was pensioned off on ill health/injury grounds, while his fellow team member saw the quack the next day and also got a permanent sick note.

But the police fondness for sport doesn't extend to games played over the Irish Sea. The knackers urged Liverpool licensing magistrates to turn down a request from the city's Irish Centre for a bar extension because an exclusive TV showing there of the All-Ireland Hurling final did not constitute, they said, a "special occasion". Nor will the luckless Paddies be allowed to sup Guinness during the Gaelic football final at the end of the month.

Strangely, the same bench *was* able to grant a Sunday afternoon extension only minutes earlier for a social club where a rugby match was due to be played by, er, Merseyside police. Taxpayers hope no injuries will occur — either on or off the field — to add to their already phenomenal bill.

UN NEWS

THE PARANOIA of Boo Boo Ghali, secretary-general of the United Nations, has struck again.

Convinced that his Arab brethren are trying to send him to heaven, he has banned visitors' tours of the UN's East River Obelisk, hitherto New York's most popular tour site. The cash-strapped UN will lose some $500,000 in the next three months — and deeply irritate more than 100,000 visitors whose worldwide taxes bankroll Boo Boo's nepotistic machine.

Even though visitors undergo an array of bomb detectors and baggage searches, it has been decreed that they still constitute a security risk. The real reason, of course, is a retrospective attempt to justify the ban on the UN's press corps bringing visitors into their on-site offices. This diktat was in retaliation for their role in letting the world know that Boo Boo had stopped Shen Tung, a Chinese dissident, from addressing the hacks.

US NEWS

HAS John Major finally come up with some dirt on Bill Clinton's achievement in avoiding the Vietnam draft?

How else to explain the story from Washington sources about the former Rhodes scholar's feeble excuse to the Bosnian president, Alija Izetbegovic, that he could not lift the UN arms embargo on the Bosnians because the British prime minister had told him the Conservative government would fall if the Bosnians were to get the wherewithal to defend themselves?

John Major's party, in between searching for Clinton's immigration records at the behest of his Republican opponents, also put the full strength of his election team behind Bush and Quayle.

PUPILS at a school in Washington DC, preparing to have their inoculation jabs recently, were told by a teacher that the school would have to obtain their parents' consent first.

Up piped a voice from the back of the class. "Please don't bother my mom, she is much too busy to deal with things like that," said Chelsea Clinton (for it was she). "Couldn't you ask my dad?"

"Bloody whingeing PM"

FOOTBALL NEWS

HOW serious is Millwall, football's most anti-social club, about stamping out racists and undesirables?

To judge by the experiences of one fan, the club's rhetoric, following its move to a newly-built stadium, has a hollow ring.

The fan, Jakko Jakszyk, wrote to Millwall after club chairman and East End boy made good, Reg Burr, appeared on TV proudly promoting the new Kick Racism Out of Football campaign. In an interview with Wimbledon's John Fashanu, one of the game's most famous black players, Burr claimed: "Racism has been all but eliminated from Millwall."

Jakszyk was pleased to hear this. Earlier this year he attended Millwall's game against Watford at the club's now demolished stadium, the Den, and watched in anger while adjacent spectators tormented Watford's contingent of black players with a volley of abuse in which the words "stab", "kill" and "black" were regularly linked with a part of the female anatomy.

Expecting such behaviour at Millwall, Jakszyk took no action until he heard Burr sounding off on TV. Astounded at Burr's complacency, he wrote to the Millwall chief about his experience of the club's failure to stamp out racial abuse at home fixtures. He also asked whether the club intended removing National Front newspaper sellers from outside the club's new ground, the New Den, which is built on ground known as Senegal Fields.

Burr's response was not illuminating. After explaining that Lewisham council, not Millwall, had chosen the Senegal Fields name, the chairman wrote: "I do not think that we will miss you at the New Den and I must say that I feel sorry for somebody who seems to be as sick as you are."

Perhaps Burr will now invite Coun Derek Beackon to the New Den. Beackon is the new British National Party member for Millwall ward!

with 'New Muckspreader'

THE NAUSEATING sight of Fatty Soames tucking into a dish of intervention beef, displayed on the front page of the *Torygraph* last week, highlights the curious role of the food minister.

His main aim in life, apart from fishin', huntin' and shootin', seems to be massaging the egos of newspaper editors and other media personalities, keeping the news of his lunatic ministry's excesses and bungles out of the headlines.

So skilled is Soames that he managed to convince the *Torygraph* of his love of the beef of "old England", while his mad officials run amok in the meat industry, plotting to close down the very slaughterhouses which produce the meat of which Fatty claims to be so fond.

Not that Fatty's charms are limited to the denizens of Canary Wharf. Recently, when BBC2's *Newsnight* was working on a feature on organo-phosphorous pesticides, the Countess of Mar was considered for interview. Her own life has been made a misery after accidental exposure during sheep dipping. So alarmed were Fatty's officials at the prospect of the holder of the oldest title in the land accusing the ministry of agriculture of the wholesale poisoning of farmers, that Fatty was rushed into the breach. *Newsnight* was evidently sufficiently charmed for, on the night, the countess was never interviewed.

Clearly these media skills are wasted on the ministry of agriculture, hence the strident campaign by the Max Hastings organ to have Fatty appointed as chairman of the Tory party. Farmers have mixed feelings about this. Many doubt the Tory party could survive the Soames variety of tender loving care, mindful of one of his constituent's description of him as a "slimy toad".

Those few left who even care about the fate of the Tory party, however, are nevertheless willing to risk the experiment, if it means they are finally rid of the final member of John Selwyn Shitbag's agriculture team. Such is the contempt with which this apology of a minister is viewed that even the destruction of the Tory party seems to be a small price to pay for his removal.

ONE countryside tradition that does not find favour with Fatty's cronies is the Agriculture Wages Board, which is threatened with extinction under the government's pretend deregulation programme.

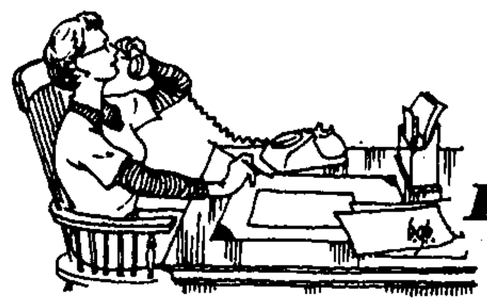
No doubt in order to ease the expenses of their huntin', fishin' and shootin', Fatty's friends are looking to economise by removing the last controls which force farmers to pay a mere 70 percent of the average industrial wage to their workforce, for the privilege of working several hours a week longer.

Decent farmers, however, are broadly in favour of the board as is the Farmworkers' Union. Both forces are uniting with the usually sluggish National Farmers' Union (NFU), otherwise known as No Fucking Use, to fight the proposals for its abolition. So keen is the ministry for the destruction of agriculture to prove that it is doing something about deregulation, however, that it will probably succeed in convincing its new mistress, the so far untainted Gillian Shepherd, that wrecking the stable and inoffensive agricultural wages system is a good idea.

ALBERT

Old Macdonald

ITS THAT TOWNIE BLOKE THAT MOVED IN NEXT DOOR GEORGE! HIS SYCAMORE BRANCHES ARE OVERHANGIN MY PADDOCK. CAN I CUT 'EM OFF?
TRICKY LEGAL AREA THAT MA! YOU'RE WALKIN ON EGGSHELLS THERE!
IT SAYS IN HERE THAT IF HIS BRANCHES ARE BLOCKIN YOUR LIGHT, YOU CAN CUT 'EM OFF PROVIDING YOU LET HIM HAVE THEM BACK
HOME LAWYER
OONT KNOW HIS POSTCODE DO YOU?



SALLY DEEDES

PICKFORDS, don'tcha just love 'em? Er, not much — and not at all if you were unlucky enough to have entrusted your goods to the company at its Watford warehouse.

In March last year fire destroyed the goods, and in some cases the entire worldly possessions, of some 200 families. "I suddenly felt rootless," one customer told me. "All our family history, children's paintings, letters, family Bibles going back over centuries, have disappeared."

Sensitively, Pickfords has recently run a campaign featuring a child's painting with the caption: "In Pickfords' hands, it's a Matisse."

The Sewards and Simpsons were two families whose past lives were wiped out by the fire. Mrs Seward suffered a nervous breakdown and several weeks of hospital treatment, and Mrs Simpson has spent many months on valium.

The Sewards had been forced by the recession to sell their home, and placed their furniture with Pickfords "since they were the largest and most reputable in the land. We decided it worth the struggle to pay the £452 per quarter, to keep that part of our life intact."

The family was assured by the firm's representative that they were insured for £50,000 and fire cover during transit; the Sewards claim this was also the figure for storage. The representative made a note and left, and at no time was the family contacted concerning insurance.

After the fire, Pickfords insisted it had sent a form 14 days after the removal which they (the Sewards) signed and sent back agreeing to an insurance of £12,500. Mr and Mrs Seward maintain they never received such a form, much less signed one. That Pickords itself can find no trace of the document is apparently immaterial: the firm will only pay out £12,500.

The Simpsons interviewed three storage companies and were persuaded by the Pickfords rep as to the superior security and fire precautions at the Watford warehouse. They took out an insurance for £35,000, since their representative *did* inform them that they were not covered for fire. They put their furniture in store in December 1991 while negotiating to buy a new home. When the Simpsons rang Pickfords in March to arrange delivery, the man at the other end said casually: "Oh, haven't you heard? There has been a fire and everything's been destroyed."

Both couples are very bitter about their treatment. There has been no apology, no concern and certainly no compensation for the anguish they have suffered, they say. In one instance, Mrs Seward was told: "Well, it's only furniture after all. Now you can save on the quarterly bill, which was always late anyway."

Pickfords' contracts limits the firm's liability to £20 for any one article, and clause 10a prevents claims against Pickfords for damage caused by fire — save that should the firm receive written instructions and a declaration of value three clear days before the removal starts "we will arrange insurance against this risk".

Such behaviour does not surprise Tony Wolvern, who left Pickfords eight years ago after working as an assistant manger in the Truro branch. "I didn't like what they were doing to the customers. Basically the attitude was get the job and screw the customers. In the case of damaged goods, you were told to get quotes, never replace unless you've got to, and if it was worth a lot, well, it was up to the customer to prove it."

Reports suggest the cause of the fire was "deliberate ignition by an unauthorised intruder". There were no sprinklers at the warehouse, no fire walls and no nightwatchmen. As a member of the British Association of Removers, Pickfords is governed by a code of conduct. I rang to ask for a copy and asked if precautions were not necessary for a company storing furniture. The code was for internal consumption only, I was told, and not for would-be customers seeking to establish standards required of a firm they wished to employ.

Solicitors Edwin & Co of Lincolns Inn have offered to act for everyone involved in the case, and Mrs Seward would like those who wish to join in the costs of fighting it to contact her on 0923 828440.

Letters

A real doctor writes...

Sir,

Re: Doing the Rounds (27 August).

Consultant bashing is a popular journalistic pastime, so much so that one becomes concerned more about the writer rather than the written about. The paradigm of a consultant seems to reflect laziness, greed, lack of commitment and a tendency to rough up junior doctors who raise issues such as reduction of junior staff hours.

Setting the record straight usually does not do so, but that should not prevent one trying. About half of consultants in the NHS do no private practice at all and the great majority work longer, sometimes twice as much as their contracted time in patient care and related subjects. These include teaching, research and administration. They also include fundraising to shore up the ailing NHS. The present proposals, following the Calman report, suggest that in addition to a reduction in junior staff hours, some of their remaining hours must be spent in structured teaching. By whom? When? Who will cover?

Governments come and go and health service reorganisation goes on forever. There has been a steady increase in outpatient attendances, emergency attendances and inpatient throughput over the last 15 or 20 years, year on year, in spite of the best efforts of the Tory party. The work still has to be done and noble as the objective is to reduce junior doctors' hours (a move supported by virtually all consultants, incidentally) to achieve this, we will have to treat fewer patients, or see them less often, or expand the number of doctors of all grades. Reducing the time a junior doctor takes to become a consultant may be helpful in the long run but it will not change the core (ie man years of experience) that the profession has.

But turgid explanation spoils a good story, doesn't it?

Yours truly,
MICHAEL JOY MD, FRCP,
FACC, FESC, FRAeS

Consultant Cardiologist, Longcross, Surrey.

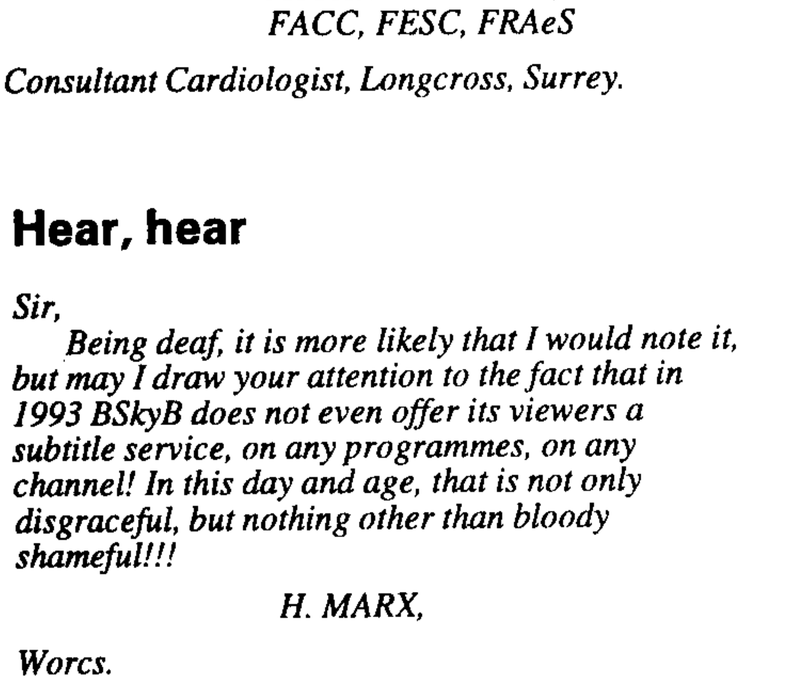
Hear, hear

Sir,

Being deaf, it is more likely that I would note it, but may I draw your attention to the fact that in 1993 BSkyB does not even offer its viewers a subtitle service, on any programmes, on any channel! In this day and age, that is not only disgraceful, but nothing other than bloody shameful!!!

H. MARX,

Worcs.



Overwheening ambition

Sir,

I see that effete "Old" Harrovian and PRIVATE EYE *stalwart, Francis Wheen, is joining the* OBSERVER.

Could this be the same F. Wheen who, not so long ago, turned down a job as Pendennis at the OBSERVER *because it was "too terrible a place to contemplate"?*

Could it be the same man who, after leaving the INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY *because of the "abominable" treatment of ex-Tina Brown groupie, the balding Stephen "ES" Glover, promptly signed up with the* INDEPENDENT *to help ghost the Weasel column?*

If so, I think we should be told.

Yours etc.,
JAMES E. WEYMOUTH,

London SE5.

Lookalike

Hitler

Hughes

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the striking resemblance of Alois Hitler, the former Austrian fast bowler, to Australian customs official Merv Hughes? Perhaps they are related? I think we should be told.

Yours,
NEIL WHITAKER,

Ripon, N. Yorks.

Brussels spout

Sir,

So you have sacked boring Old Muckspreader and replaced him with the thrusting, dynamic "new" version, whose exposure of the BSE conspiracy must have caused Mr Meldrum of the ministry to jolly well choke on his tea and biscuits!

There just seems to be a loose end or two to tie up here before the organophosphorus poisoning theory triumphs, Meldrum has to fall on his sword and the agrochemical industry is bankrupted by compensation awards. I don't want to be a spoilsport so I won't mention the decades between the introduction of OP compounds and the appearance of BSE, or the lack of correlation between exposure to them and infection, or the difference between BSE and OP poisoning, etc.

What does puzzle me a trifle is that organophosphorus compounds have been used all over the world for a long time, yet very few cases of BSE have occurred outside the UK and they have mostly been associated with British cattle or feed. There must be some reason for this and I am sure New Muckspreader can enlighten us.

After all, when you consider the infection rate in the UK and calculate the world cattle population in relation to the use of OP compounds, there must be about a million cattle a week staggering around and keeling over, yet nobody seems to have noticed them.

I know you chaps at PRIVATE EYE *have a pretty low opinion of foreigners, but still. Could it be that everyone else in the world is so blind or stupid? Or could it be that New Muckspreader is even more of a gullible dickhead than his predecessor? I think we should be told.*

Yours sincerely,
ANDREW J. WILSON,

Brussels, Belgium.

Cross party support

Sir,

Your Rotten Boroughs item on Northampton (826) is both unfair to Derngate Trust chairman Victoria Charlton and inaccurate about the borough council.

Far from being "disgraced", Ms Charlton was chosen to chair the new trust by the council because of her experience and commitment. She has done an excellent job, and enjoys cross-party support on the council despite the tendentious publicity she has endured.

Secondly, the council established the trust and the separate company to comply with Charity Commission advice — advice which they have now changed. The company structure is also now being changed accordingly, and meanwhile as you say no "fair fee" has been paid in that context.

To portray this as evidence of a "Rotten Borough" is creative far beyond the bounds of your usual satirical licence.

Yours faithfully,
CLLR J. DICKIE,

Leader of the Council, Northampton Borough Council.

Censor sensitivity

Sir,

British television may be free, as Square Eyes writes, of direct state control, but there are more ways of controlling than giving instructions.

The Peter Jay programme on the slump, which squarely blamed the government, was delayed until after the election in 1992. Not government controlled? October '86: two Radio 4 programmes in the SECRET SOCIETY *series were stopped by government injunction: the premises of the* NEW STATESMAN, *Duncan Campbell and BBC Scotland were raided by the special branch. November '87: the Radio 4 programme* MY COUNTRY RIGHT OR WRONG *stopped by government injunction. Not government controlled?*

Then it was commercial TV's turn: notoriously the campaign of vilification against Thames TV's DEATH ON THE ROCK *and the Windlesham report that exonerated it, mounted by the government and their tame newspapers. When in September '88 Channel 4 was going to ask Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Fein, to appear on a late-night live discussion, complaints were lodged with the IBA and the home secretary. Channel 4 dropped the programme. A month later there was a home office ban on all interviews with terrorist organisations.*

When DEAR SARAH, *a play about Giuseppe Conlon, was transmitted in 1990 it was revealed that it had been going around for just over four years. It had started with the BBC, then gone to Thames, and after that was turned down by all the other companies, understandably. Not government controlled?*

But PRIVATE EYE *put it in its usual colourful way in the issue of 28 September 1990: "Now that Mrs Thatcher is winding up the nation for another war in a far-off place, Downing Street has let it be known that its customary firm grip on the BBC's corporate testicles will be relaxed when it comes to finding words to describe Hussein and his deeds."*

You went on to describe how Tim Llewellyn had been disciplined by the BBC for being disrespectful when he referred to Hussein after the hanging of Farzod Bazoft.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES FYFFE,

London NW6.

Syn-agog

Sir,

Thank God! A cover of true wit. (Yasser Arafat: "Some of my best friends are Jewish.")

It reminds me of the old joke about the Rabbi who found that members of his congregation were leaving to become Quakers.

"Ah well," he said. "Some of my best Jews are Friends."

Yours,
TONY MILES,

Boca Raton, Florida.

I-SPY

Northumbria

Submitted by Nick Suckling. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Wrong verdict...

Sir,

We refer to the astonishing attack upon Fair Trials Broad [sic] by Keith Best in your letters column. We are affiliated to liberty [sic], and your readers will have already noticed, from Best's own letter, that a Human Rights pressure group is hardly likely to be racist. We have looked in vain at our policy documents for any support as to his suggestion as to our policy. He is probably quoting from a draft discussion paper sent to him in confidence for advice and comment: such is the "Best" behaviour. We are enthusiastic supporters of the humanitarian work of prisoners abroad [sic]: may they flourish under their new director.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN ILLEGIBLE,

Chairman, Fair Trials Abroad, London WC1.

...wrong bloke

Sir,

Backbiter's piece (27 August) regarding Keith Best's new appointment was substantially inaccurate. As a trustee of Prisoners Abroad, a former staff member and as a paid-up member of the Labour party, I would like to put the record straight for you.

Firstly, Keith's new job is director of the Immigration Appeals Advisory Service, not chairman. Secondly, Keith Best did not form Prisoners Abroad — it was set up in 1978 by three individuals who were concerned that no assistance was available to those Britons imprisoned overseas. Keith Best was appointed director in 1989 — one of his predecessors was Alf Dubs, a former Labour MP.

To suggest that Prisoners Abroad is a lackey of the government is both wrong and potentially dangerous to over 800 clients held in foreign prisons. Prisoners Abroad is an independent charity whose paramount concern is the welfare of our clients. It is, unlike Fair Trials Abroad, a welfare and service providing charity and not a campaigning organisation. You should know — you regularly donate a number of copies of PRIVATE EYE *for us to send to our clients held overseas! You should check your facts before going to print.*

Yours,
GILL ASTARITA,

London N1.

Latin lover

Sir,

Another pedant writes: pace your correspondent Mr Ferguson, the line Plautus gives Labrax in RUDENS *— to which he presumably refers — is not "rem acu tetigisti" but simply "tetigisti acu" ("you have touched it with a needle"). Plautus had a certain fondness for the double entendre, and the inclusion of the word "rem" would have spoilt the joke, such as it was.*

Yours faithfully,
EMILY MORRIS,

London N1.

Animal magic

Sir,

But whatever happened to the gerbil? We think we should be told, etc.

All at
THE PINK GUIDE,

Manchester.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"That part of it is behind us now... I'm drawing a line under the sand."
JOHN MAJOR
(M.R. Cook)

"I went to see it [Sunset Boulevard] with an open mind, thinking I wouldn't enjoy it."
PETE MURRAY, LBC
(M.L. Allsop)

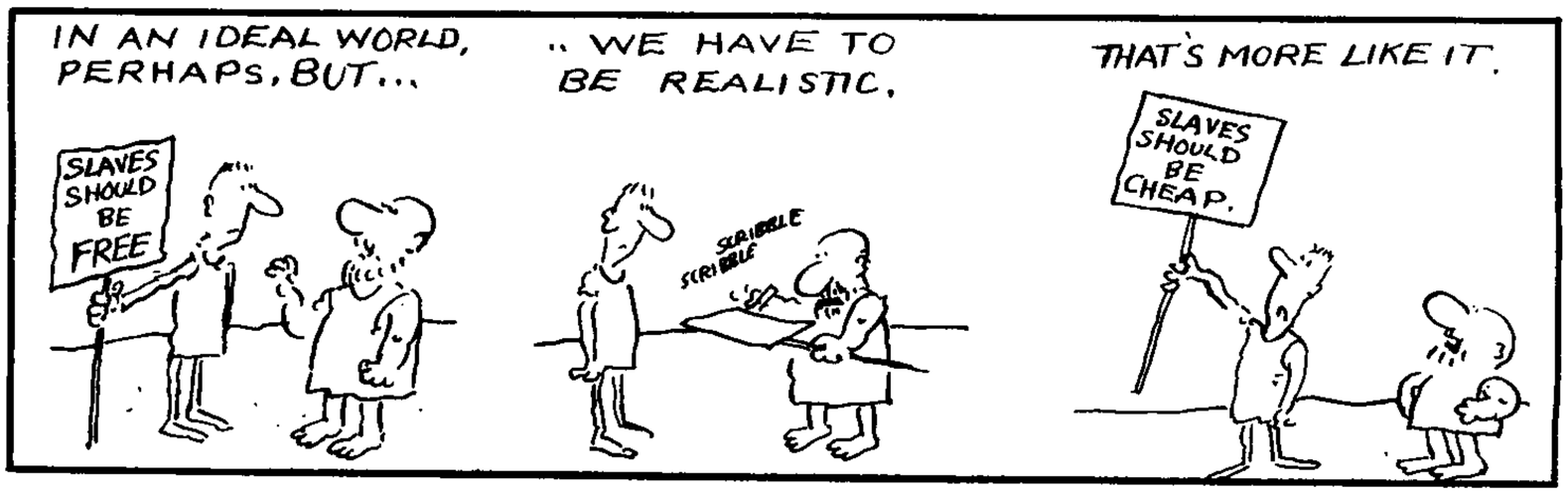
"Nick Faldo has shown himself to be a worthy world No. 1 by finishing second here today."
COMMENTATOR, Radio 5
(Roy Coles)

"We are not wholly an island, except geographically."
JOHN MAJOR, BBC1
(Ben Walden)

"Let's see if we can find someone who speaks braille..."
ANNEKA RICE, BBC1
(Mike Forsyth)

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN


IN AN IDEAL WORLD, PERHAPS, BUT...
SLAVES SHOULD BE FREE
.. WE HAVE TO BE REALISTIC.
SCRABBLE
THAT'S MORE LIKE IT.
SLAVES SHOULD BE CHEAP.

Letter from **Israel**

from Our Own Correspondent

THEY'VE signed! Our prime minister, Yitzhak "bone breaker" Rabin, has achieved the impossible — a peace accord with the Palestinians that does not actually promise them a state.

All they can be sure of at the moment are Jericho, the Gaza Strip and their own Knackers. Environment minister Yossi Sarid openly lauded the deal as a bargain.

After decades of war, many of us indeed feel that "enough is enough", and so the news could not be better. Once accepted by the Palestinians, Israel will at last stop being what it was for most of its 46 years: the world's most unsafe place for Jews.

The deal might look like a sell-out to some of Yasser Arafat's men, but Palestinians can take comfort from our very own rightwing. Its leaders are warning that Rabin, who only last month reiterated that he would never speak to the PLO, is only sparing our sensibilities. The shifty Labour premier, they predict, will "give away" not only all the West Bank and Gaza Strip within five years, but also Arab Jerusalem.

Nevertheless, the opposition is having trouble finding its voice. Likud party leader Bibi Natanyahu shares his party's commitment to Greater Israel, but he also has other loyalties. Natanyahu used to live in the United States and made lots of friends in the Pentagon. Now that the White House has blessed the deal, he fears to upset it by too violent a rejection.

Howls of protest have come from the extremist Tzomet party. All its chairman General Eytan can suggest, though, is that Israelis instead start tightening their belts in preparation for economic sanctions. The largely religious settlers seem equally unrealistic. One of their spokesmen seriously advised all Israelis (a nation of car-addicts) to go on a week's hike through "these lush and holy places" before deciding.

The government, on the other hand, has proved quite adept at rallying support from a bewildered population. Last week, for instance, Mr Rabin suddenly revealed that the PLO, hitherto painted as the most evil Arab regime, had actually killed far fewer Israelis than our friendly next-door Egyptians.

Defence ministry sources also pointed out that once peace treaties had been signed with all our neighbours — something for which PLO recognition had been a prerequisite — Israel "could live with a bit of terrorism". Former generals then explained that as long as the Israeli army is allowed the "hot pursuit" of terrorists into the Palestinian-run areas, security was no problem. Very few Israelis, of course, are familiar with Northern Ireland.

What we are told to expect instead is an economic boom partly prompted by 200 million Muslims rushing to buy Israeli fridges. Huge road-building projects linking the Arab enclaves have also been promised to our contractors. Their workforces will, one assumes, consist of West Bank Palestinians. They might need the jobs: finance minister Abraham Shohat has already said that he will not let them export their vegetables to Israel.

Add to this President Clinton's promise to keep US aid to Israel at its wartime level of $3.1 billion per annum, plus another $160 million of promised European help, and the accord looks tempting: 65 percent of Israelis already back it, and even one senior Likud figure, maverick Ronni Milo, is pondering its endorsement.

Still, our government has played a little joke on the Palestinians. Students of the Old Testament — ie anybody who attended an Israeli school — knows that there is a spell on Jericho. The Book of Joshua says that when its residents refused to welcome the Hebrews, Joshua and his forces killed most of them. Faced with the survivors, says the Bible: "Joshua laid an oath upon them at that time, saying 'Cursed before the Lord be the man that rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho. At the cost of his first-born shall he lay its foundation.' "

Let us hope that Yasser Arafat, newly wed to a West Bank blonde half his age, is not planning to start a family...

FUNNY OLD WORLD

"I should have listened to an old man's wisdom," Mzee Opesen declared to members of the Ugandan Ongino Christian Youth. "My grandfather told me: 'Always wear underpants beneath your kanzu before you mount your bicycle.' Foolishly I mocked him, and now my heart is a dry ear pod."

Opesen explained to the youths what had happened. "I was cycling home from the market, dressed only in my spotless white kanzu, when a terrible whirlwind appeared. It blew up my kanzu, ballooning it over my

face and lifting me far above the ground. I kept control but, when the bike landed, I sat down hard upon my own testicles, squashing them against the saddle to the flatness of patties. A sharp pain ran through my entire body. Then I felt a deep inner peace and I went into a deep sleep."

Opesen was taken to the dispensary, and regained consciousness an hour later. "All my life I have tried to maintain the proud ancient dress of those olden days of Semei Kakungulu," he said sadly, "but no longer. I am deformed and shall cloak my manhood in trousers." Two youths fainted during the speech and received medical attention. *(The Monitor [Kampala], 6/8/93. Spotter — Nicholas Crispin)*

—o—

o "I've been in this job 21 years, but I ain't never seen that many people get out of a Pontiac. Certainly not naked," patrolman Johnnie Vince told reporters in Vinton, Louisiana.

The Pontiac, driven by two Pentecostal preachers, Sammy and Donny Rodriguez, was doing 100 mph through the town centre, en route to a religious retreat in Florida, when it was spotted by traffic police. Vice explained: "We chased it, it crashed into a tree and turned over. Then, one by one, twenty naked people started climbing out. Not a stitch on, no socks, no underwear, no nuthin'. There was twenty of 'em altogether. It was when we found five naked kids in the trunk that I read the riot act."

"The devil made us do it," Sammy Rodriguez told magistrates. "We had six cars when we left Texas. But God told us this town was evil, and commanded us to take our clothes off and all get into the Pontiac. It's to do with ley-lines. You see, Satan can get you in a Ford, but not a Pontiac. Praise the Lord, and let my people go." He was remanded in custody, pending psychiatric reports. *(Atlanta Journal, 20/8/93. Spotter — Vintona Philips)*

—o—

o *"Fhukur Balak is not dead, he is in Samadhi," Chitta Sikdar repeatedly told a bemused delegation of doctors from the Calcutta Health Authority. "Your medical schools teach you nothing of the light which trembles within us all."*

The delegation was demanding access to the body of Guru Fhukur Balak, which had been lying on blocks of ice in an air-conditioned room in his ashram since May 5th. Although several doctors had pronounced him dead six weeks earlier, his 1,500 followers insisted he was still alive, and refused to allow a cremation.

"When I pointed out that complete absence of heartbeat and breathing was a certain indication of the total cessation of life," said one official, "they became abusive. Then they apologised and told me if it was due to his deep meditative state, and that he had promised to rise again next Tuesday. When Tuesday came and nothing happened, they told us gurus did not keep diaries and refused to let us take the body. I said, you've got an answer for everything but, mark my words, that man is dead."

"If he has not returned to his body by Diwali, you may have a case," Mr Sikdar conceded, "but we all know your real motives. You are on a commission from the crematorium." (Khaleej Times, 18/6/93. Spotter — Michael J. Lewry)

Compiled by
Victor Lewis-Smith

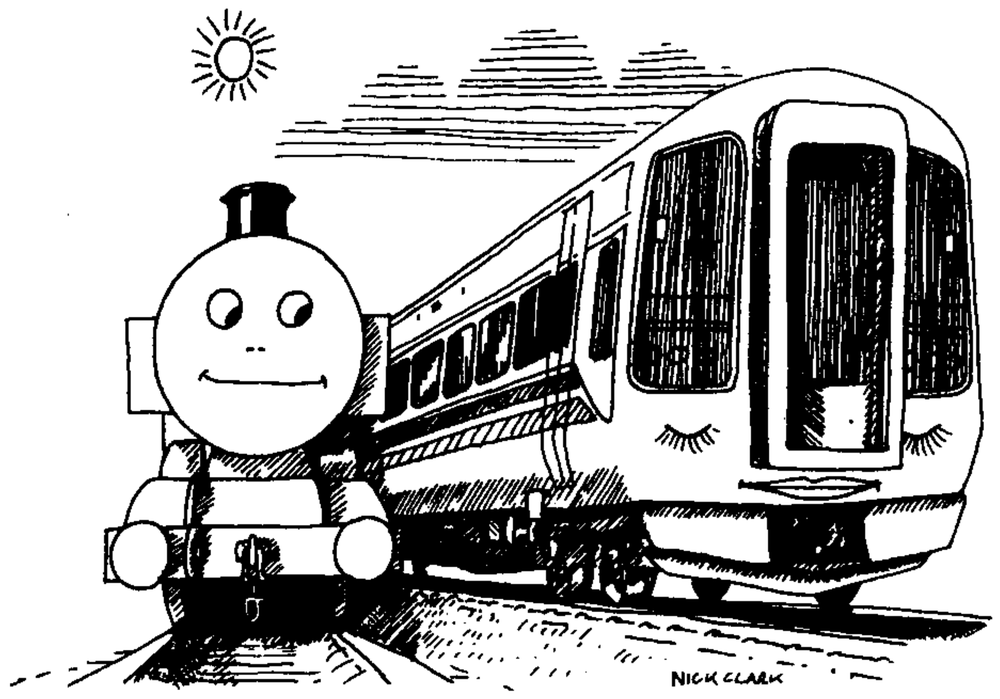
101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR (13)

THE BEGINNING OF A QUEUE

THOMAS

THE PRIVATISED TANK ENGINE

Thomas takes a lunch break



"IT'S important that you understand this," said the Fat Controller while Thomas waited for a green signal. "I'm always watching my bottom line."

"Couldn't button your trousers this morning, eh?" muttered Thomas.

"What?"

"I said: 'We've always followed sound business principles'."

"Yes, Thomas. Now, to make sure the books continue to balance..."

"Sorry to interrupt, sir, but aren't we forgetting something? If we devote too much attention to our profit margins we may forget we are really here to provide a train service."

"Yes, that's the idea. Er, no. No, what I mean is we have to stay on our toes..."

"Sorry, you're missing my point, sir. It's time for my midday service, but my signal is still red."

"Yes, I was coming to that." He paused. "Thomas, we're not running the midday service any more, for sound business reasons."

Thomas instantly decided on mutiny: he would pass the signal at danger. But then he saw a big black car accelerating away from the yard. Behind the tinted windows sat the Fat Railman.

"Ah, I get it," said Thomas. "The midday run was economic last month because we owned our own track and stations."

"Well, you must remember..."

"But this month the Fat Railman owns our track and stations, and he's also taking a keen interest in his bottom line. He's charging so much for us to do the midday run that it is suddenly losing us money."

There was an awkward silence. The Fat Controller was shocked at Thomas's grasp of sound business principles.

"So what happens now?" asked Thomas.

"Just wait till the evening rush hour. It's only five hours away."

"And Annie and Clarabel?"

"Yes."

"And my driver? And my guard, and the signalmen and station staff?"

"Yes. Look, Thomas, don't worry about your midday passengers. They'll be all right — one doesn't have to pay access charges on the roads, you know."

So Thomas gave in and spent the afternoon contemplating Selina the Sprinter Unit's bottom line.

The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Saturday

Today I went in my helicopter to a place Mr O'Donnell called "the West Country". But when we arrived I found it was not a country at all, it was part of England. Mr O'Donnell explained that this was a "morale boosting tour" for me to meet my supporters. When we arrived at the hall, there were only two people there, which is not a considerable number of supporters in my judgement.

Mr O'Donnell was not unduly disappointed. "We invited all the Conservatives in Somerset to meet you," he said, "but the other couple are away on holiday." He was obviously joking, and the real reason why no one else came to see me was that the venue was kept secret for "security reasons".

I had a very interesting and useful exchange of views with the two stalwart Conservatives, who were both as it happened lifelong Chairmen of Tory Associations, and I was very gratified when they said that they were still hoping that they would be able to give me their support at the next election. They were not in the slightest bit worried about the tax that my friend Mr Kenneth Clark is going to put on old people's heating bills. "We're going to keep the Aga going on old copies of your Manifesto," one of them said, "the one where you promised never to put up VAT."

Sunday

Today I have had a brilliant idea! I read an article in the Sunday Times saying that we never export anything to Japan, so I decided all on my own that I would fly to Tokyo and tell the Japanese to "buy British". I also had the brilliant idea of taking six students on the plane with me, so that they could write articles about me in their school magazines. This is better press than Mr O'Donnell ever got me! I am doing without advisers from now on, because they only come up with silly PR stunts which make me look ridiculous.

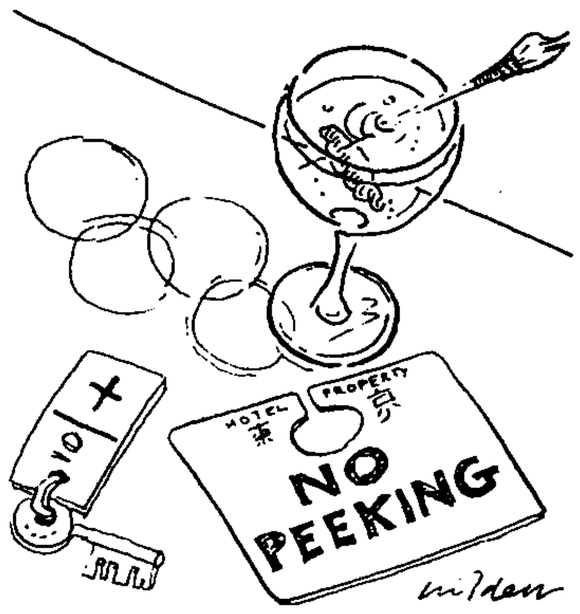
When I arrived I was allowed to meet the Japanese prime minister, who apologised that he was so busy, but he was very unpopular at the moment, his economy was in trouble and he was just about to leave on a morale-boosting tour of Japan. I felt not inconsiderably sorry for him being in such a mess. But I told him firmly that it was high time the Japanese bought more goods made in Britain. "Like what?" he asked, holding his sides and laughing, which the interpreter explained is an ancient Japanese gesture of respect.

After I had thought for a while, one of the schoolchildren, who were filming my historic meeting on video, passed me a note reading "Nissan cars are made in Newcastle". I immediately repeated this to the prime minister, who laughed uproariously and gave me a traditional samurai sword as a present. "It is called hari-kiri," he said. "You will find it very useful."

Monday

Today I have made another decision all on my own, without consulting either Mr O'Donnell or Miss Hogg. So much for my critics who say I cannot think for myself! I decided to fly to Monte Carlo (which is not in this country, although I am not exactly sure which country it is in!) to throw my full weight behind Manchester's bid to have the Olympic Games. I can't wait to see all my advisers' faces when they see headlines reading "Manchester Wins Gold Thanks To PM's Brilliant Intervention".

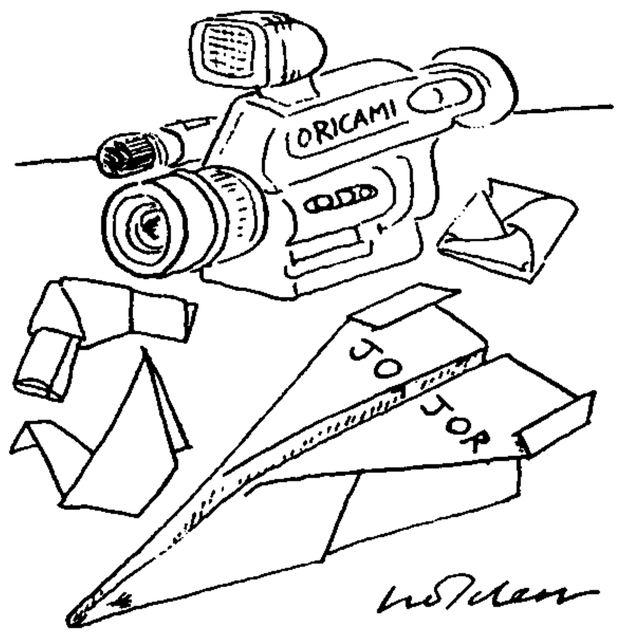
When I arrived at the hotel, the Manchester officials were suitably surprised. "Good grief," they exclaimed, "look who's here. There's no doubt who'll win it now. Peking here we come!" I did not fully understand this, but I assumed that they were planning to go to a local Chinese restaurant to celebrate.



Tuesday

Today I have been on another of my brilliant morale-boosting flying visits. Only this time I did not have to take a plane, because I had gone to lend my support to our great chess player Mr Short (a Conservative supporter, by the way!) who is on his way to winning the world championship against the Russians. My wife Norman asked me why I wanted to be associated with "that silly little man with glasses who keeps losing". I took no notice of this advice (or indeed any other — oh no!) and I was very pleased when I arrived at the theatre to find that Mr Short was doing extremely well. He had come second in almost every game.

Mr Hurd has been trying to copy my Olympic Games idea! He has told everyone that China should not stage the Games because of their human rights record. I have to agree. It's all right to let them run Hong Kong but not something important like the Olympics.



Wednesday

The papers (which I never read) are still saying that my Cabinet is split over taxes. This is ridiculous and shows how little they know about what is going on. My friend Mr Clarke has apparently made a speech saying that he intends to put up taxes and keep benefits the same. Other people in the Cabinet say that he should keep taxes the same and cut down on the benefits. So where is this split they are all talking about? There must be some considerably unintelligent people working in the newspapers, who've probably got too many 'O' levels for the their own good!

Memo to self: Incidentally I am beginning to get in no small measure mildly furious about the way Mr Clarke is going round making speeches about all our policies. Anybody would think he is Prime Minister.

Thursday

I am beginning to think that my ex-friend Norma Lamont may be my friend again after all. He has written very nice articles in all the newspapers this morning saying that "with firm, decisive leadership, Britain can lead the world". This is a very generous tribute to my leadership skills which I particularly appreciate in view of the sad way in which I had to resign him. At last the newspapers are recognising all that I have done for Britain since I led us out of the ERM and into the recovery which is very much here. Oh yes, whatever the newspapers say. This is in my judgement a very good omen for our party conference next month.

Friday

Norma Lamont is definitely my ex-friend again. He has now attacked me on television and even had the nerve to say that he supported me!

I have got a secret new book now to go with my secret "Bastards" book. It is called "Devils" and on the first page is Mr Lamont, who He is also in the "Bastards" book as well. There are no fixed rules, but in certain circumstances a person, ie Mr Lamont, can be in both books, oh yes. There is also an ultra-secret "Loonies" book, which I showed to my wife Norma. "Why has it got your name on the front?" she asked, but did not wait for a reply. The first entry is Sir Richard

Body, who is an MP who is challenging my leadership. "How dare he?" I asked our regular crisis Cabinet meeting. "He has no experience of being Prime Minister and would obviously make a terrible mess of it." "Sounds familiar," said Mr Waldegrave, as he brought in a hat with a lot of names in it. "This is not tea," I said.

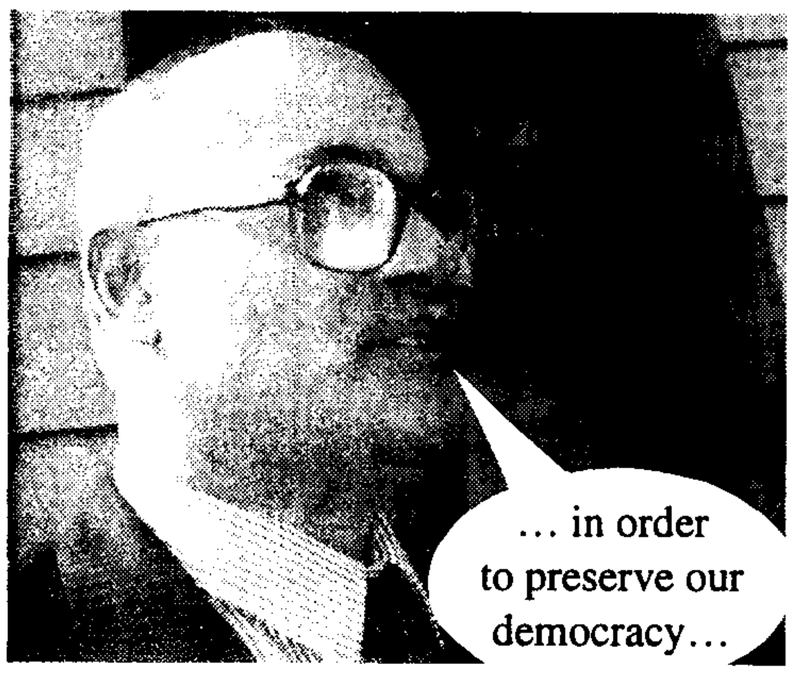
Poor Mr Waldegrave! He is clearly cracking up and will soon find himself in the "Loonies Book".

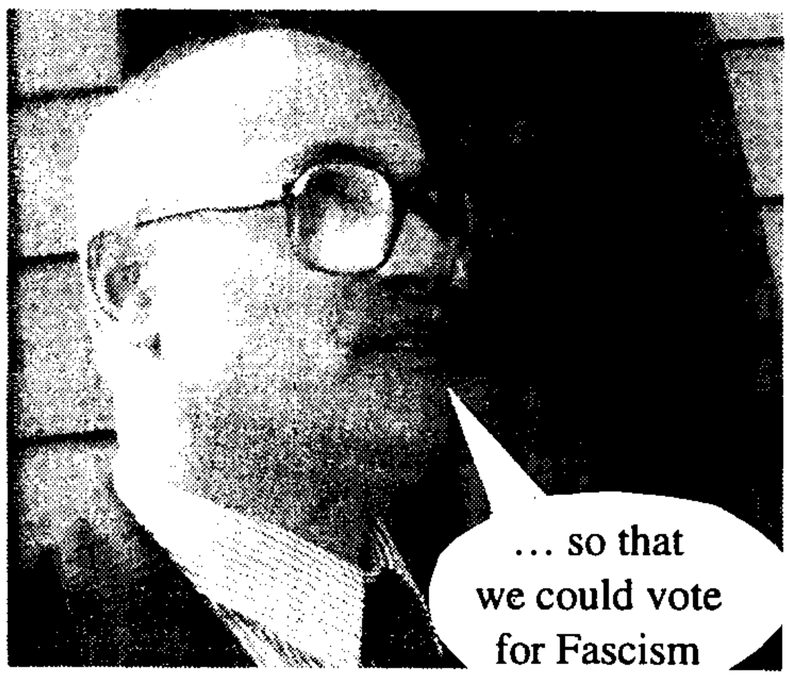
Saturday

I have made it clear that I will not discuss the so-called Leadership Crisis which is not a crisis at all in any terms whatsoever in my judgement. This is a closed subject.

Sunday

My piece in the Sunday Telegraph on the leadership crisis makes it clear that I am taking a tough line against so-called "Stalking Horses". My message to all MPs is clear and will definitely rally the party around me: "Back me or I stay." It could not be clearer than that. Oh no.





A Taxi-Driver writes

Every week a well-known taxi-driver is invited to comment on an issue of topical importance. This week London's first female cabdriver **Mrs Teresa Gorblimey** MP gives her views on the leadership crisis in the Conservative Party.

Gorblimey, that John Major. Talk about useless. He couldn't organise a piss-up in a brewery. Hopeless. How did we get landed with 'im, that's what I wanna know. Well, enough's enough. What this country needs is a woman in charge, like Mrs T, gor bless 'er, except younger and called Teresa Gorblimey. Know what I mean? Bloody cyclists. Get out of the way. Anyway, that John Major. Know what I'd do wiv 'im? Challenge 'im to a leadership contest, that's what. It's the only language 'e understands.

NEXT WEEK: Dave Gore-Booth (Cab no. 4572) explains why Foreign Office officials have to tell lies to judicial enquiries.

The Alternative Rocky Horror Service Book

No. 94: A Special Service Prescribed For The Use Of Clerks In Holy Orders Who Have Been Found Drunk In Charge Of Their Parish.

Vicar: The landlord be with you.

All: And with thy spirits.

Vicar: What will it be?

All: The usual.

There shall then be a suitable reading, such as the First Chapter of the Book of Hugh Johnson (The Good Wine Guide). After the reading the following responses will be said:

Vicar: O Lord, open thou our lips.

All: And our mouths shall be filled with drink.

The Communion

There shall then follow the distribution of the wine (crisps may be substituted for bread).

Vicar *(as he administers the cup)*: Cheers *(or it may be 'Down the Hatch').*

Communicant: I won't say no to another.

There shall then be sung a suitable hymn or piece of music, such as 'Knees Up Mother Brown', 'I Belong To Glasgow' or 'Roll Out The Barrel'.

Prayers

Vicar: O Lord... I feel terrible... ish thish church going round or have I eaten shomething? Shorry, offisher, you can't take me in, I'm a priesht in lasht orders, I mean holy orders.

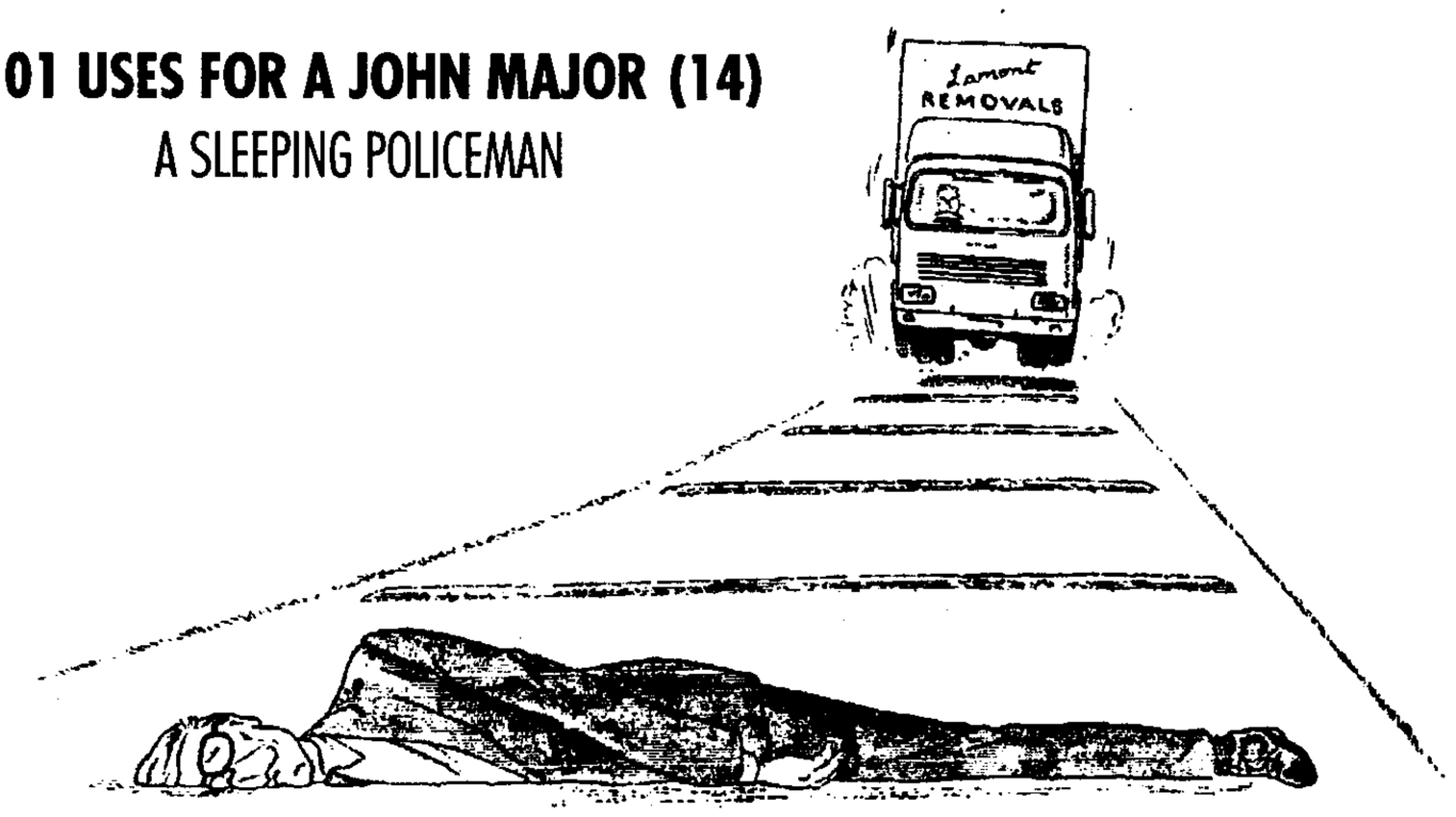
Police Officer: Come in peace.

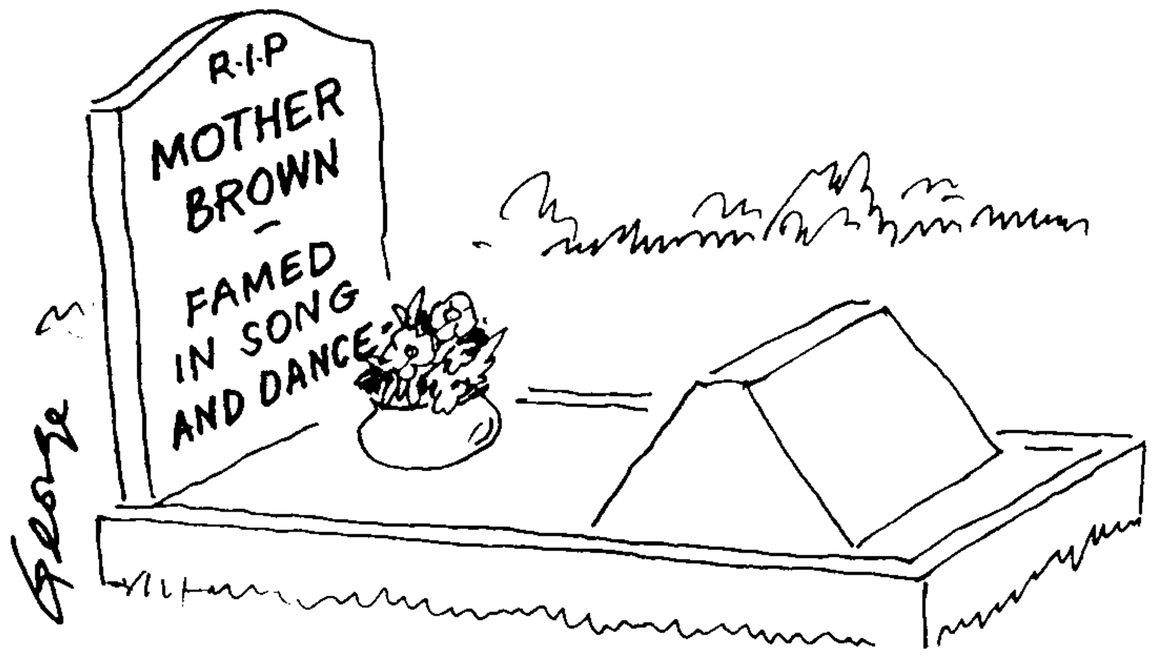
Vicar: It's a fair cop.

There then follows the confession, which shall be taken and used in evidence against Rev N. or Rev M.

101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR (14)

A SLEEPING POLICEMAN





CONTROVERSY OVER CHINESE BID TO TAKE OVER WORLD

by Our Chinese Staff **Hoo Flung Dung Xiao Ping**

Peking, Thursday

THE CHINESE government is reported to be furious over criticism of its attempt to take over the world.

The Americans had voiced apprehension that the Chinese record on Human Rights was "perhaps a drawback when it came to world domination".

A Chinese spokesman, Mr Hoo Flung Discus, however, attacked the West and said: "Why keep going on about massacring students, starving baby girls to death and stringing up everyone who doesn't agree with us? That was all a long time ago. It was this morning. Now everything has changed.

"We want to run the world and we will run it faster than anyone else."

Those Records in Full

Shot Students *(shurely Put'? Ed.)*
D.X. Ping *(Republic of China)* 970

Men for High Jump
D.X. Ping *(Republic of China)*
3 million

Synchronised Swinging From Ropes
D.X. Ping *(Republic of China)*
7 million

EXPLORERS FALL OUT

by Our Men Down in the Polls **Jon Snow, Peter Snow and David Frost**

THE MAN who accompanied world-famous explorer John Twittleton-Witless-Major on his expedition to Nowhere At All, has described his former colleague as "utterly useless".

Norman Lamont, 51, who remained in the background throughout the catastrophic journey which ended in ignominious failure, said:

"Twittleton-Witless-Major wanted to take all the credit for the disaster. I did not mind. He got all the publicity because he has a silly face, but in fact I did all the work and now I have to carry the can". *(This was believed to be a reference to a party can of Special Brew [Export Strength] from Thresher's, prop. J. Onanooga.)*

"If I had had better leadership, the expedition would not have been a disaster", he said. "Just a fiasco. However, I am not bitter, do not get me wrong. All I am saying is that I support John Major 100 per cent."

Polar Bore

Majorton-Twit replied to the charges, saying: "I am not going out; I may be here for some time."

Sir Ranulph - Twistleton - Wickham-Fiennes is 40° below zero.

COUNCIL ELECTION LATEST

LIZ

BY CUTTER PERKINS & RGJ

BALMORAL...
I'M A NOT INCONSIDERABLE EXPERT ON MUGS!
THE "FERGIE" COMES HAND-FINISHED!
FOR SALE
WINDSOR COLLECTION - A CATALOGUE OF DISASTERS
HOR'S TH' CHEAPEST THING IN THERE!
BALMORAL CAR BOOT SALE
WILL THE FOREIGNERS PAY THESE PRICES?
FATHA AN' MUTHA PAY FER NUTHIN', PAL!!
HORSE-WOMAN OF THE YEAR!
IS HE GERRIN' HIS OATS REGULAR, PET?
AYE! CAN'T YEZ TELL?
№28
G'DAY YER MAJ! HOW'S ABOUT HUNKERIN' DOWN AN' AIRIN' OUR DIFFERENCES? STREWTH, XXXX, BOOMERANG, ETC...
EEK!
REPUBLIC OF OZ
XXXX
SHOW YER PROPOSALS TA WOR LASS AN' AH'LL DE-COLON-ISE YA!!

THAT MURDOCH WEDDING — AS NOT SEEN IN THE SUN

THE Sun

BLIMEY! IT'S THE BLACK AND WHITE MARRIAGE SHOW

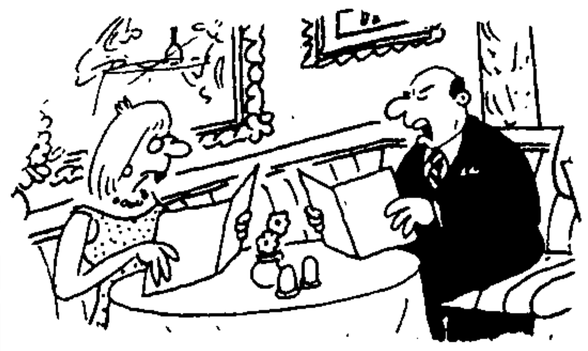
by Our Man At The Front
GARRY BUSHELL

GUESS who's coming to dinner, Rupert?! YOU, probably, in your new son-in-law's cooking pot! 'Cos your nearest and dearest has only just gone and got herself hitched to someone from Bongo-Bongo Land! Elkin Pianim, no less! Bloody Elkin! Excuse my Ghanaian!! Couldn't she find any decent Aussies, Yanks or Brits without ending up shacking up with one of our African cousins!?!

Coming over here and stealing our women!?! Blimey! Still, loved the dress — pity it was the groom's father who was wearing it!?!

Blimey! Rupert, what are you giving him for a wedding present? A banjo?!? And what are the guests getting? Watermelon? Blimey!

(You're fired. R.M.)



"No, I said he was a Dirty Digger!"

THAT MURDOCH WEDDING — AS SEEN IN THE SUN

THE Sun

ROYAL WEDDING MAKES WORLD REJOICE

by Our Court Staff
O.B.N. LICKSPITTLEJOHN

ALL OVER the world bells rang out last night to celebrate the historic union of two great cultures, shining a beacon of hope across the globe. Her Royal Highness Elizabeth, the heir to the Murdoch throne, was wed in solemn grandeur to St Elkin Pianim, the son of the Ghanaian Ashanti Chieftain, A. Kwame Pianim.

The peoples of the world danced openly in the streets as the epoch-shattering nuptials were celebrated from the Sun to Today, from the Times to the Sunday Times *(shurely 'from Sydney to San Francisco'? Ed)*.

Messages of goodwill poured in from heads of department from all over Murdoch's empire and, as the radiant couple were wafted away on a honeymoon in heaven, peace broke out all over the universe.

God bless you, King Rupert! And may I have a rise? *(Shurely 'May choirs of angels sing thee to thy rest'? Ed.)*

Poetry Corner

In Memoriam
Raymond Burr

So. Farewell
Then
Raymond Burr.

Perry Mason.

That was one
Of your
Roles.

Ironside. That
Was

"Objection, Your
Honour!"

"Objection
Over-ruled"

The other.

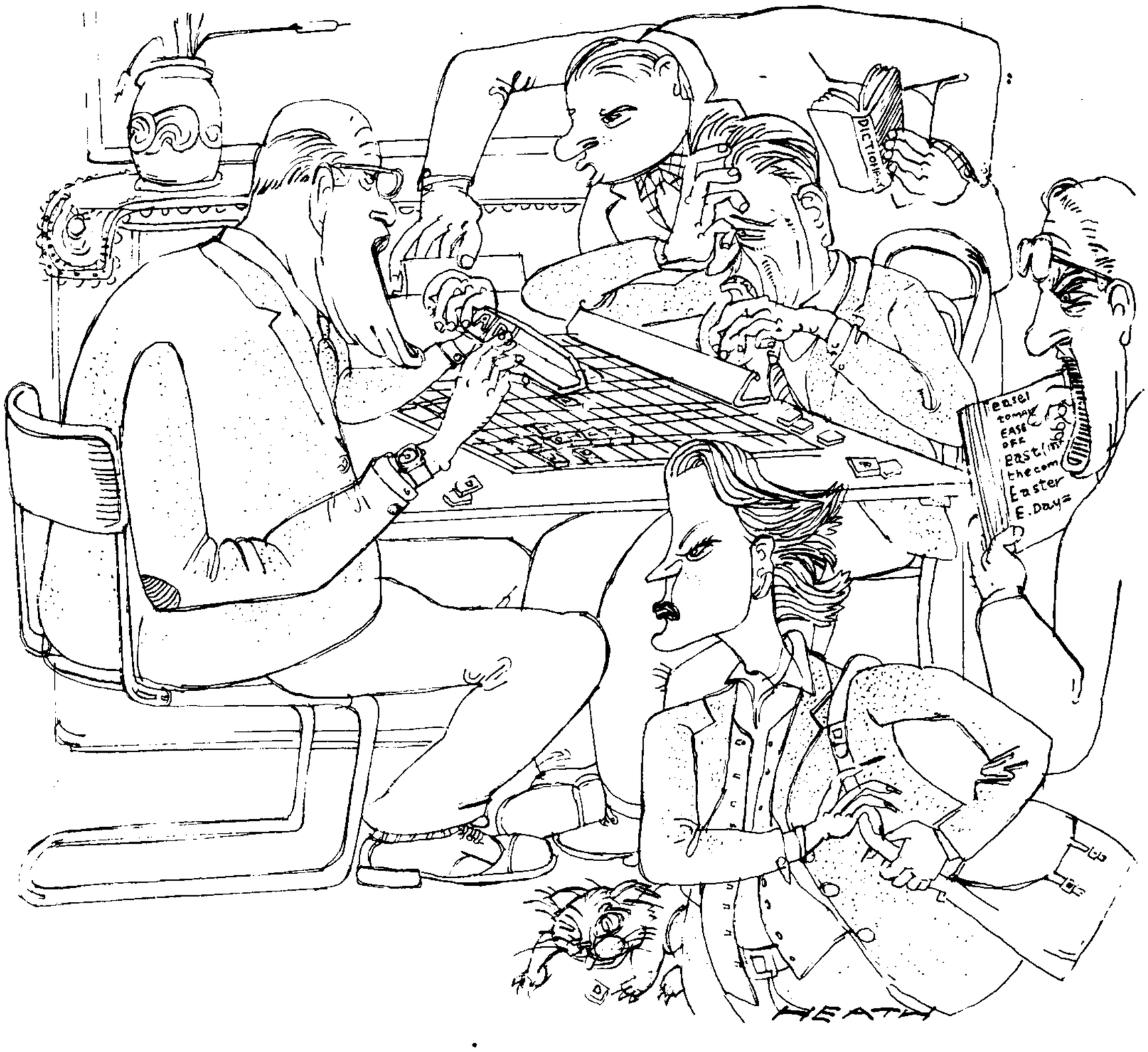
E.J. Thribb (Court 17½)

That new Pinter play text in full

(Middleaged man in glasses sitting in room. Critic enters nervously)

Pinter: Did you like my play?

(Very long pause indeed)

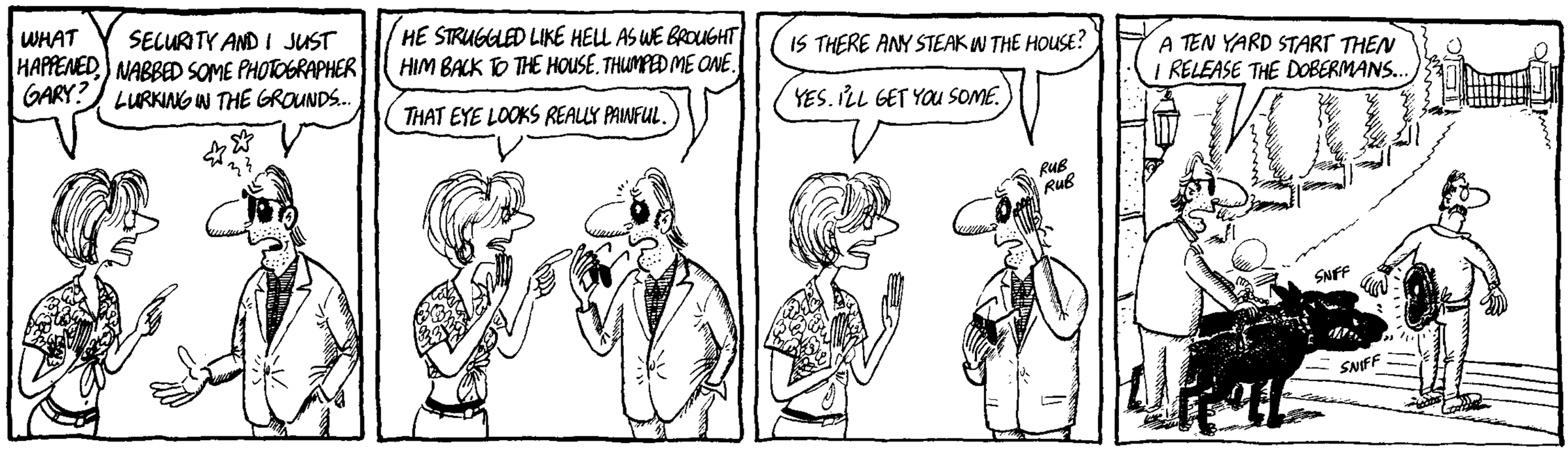


Great Bores Of Today.

"... I don't think em counts really I know it's in the dictionary but a lot of words in there aren't allowed I mean if I can't have ibid which is perfectly acceptable I don't see why you should have that actually I once got 38 for ibid by putting the D on a triple word score and one of the chaps I was playing with had been in the Scrabble championships and he didn't see anything wrong with it still I won't insist I'll do something else I take it no one will object to ylt which is a Mongolian duck no it's not in that dictionary I know come on it *is* only a game you know it's meant to be enjoyable it's ridiculous to squabble over ylt which is a perfectly good word oh no look I've picked up all vowels again last time it was all consonants hang on I'll do IOU that's it brilliant that's one three triple two on the U and then read across and you get spu which is a word I know it is if you look it up it'll be there they had it on *Call My Bluff* once I make that twenty-eight..."

Celeb

LIGGER


WHAT HAPPENED, GARY?
SECURITY AND I JUST NABBED SOME PHOTOGRAPHER LURKING IN THE GROUNDS..
HE STRUGGLED LIKE HELL AS WE BROUGHT HIM BACK TO THE HOUSE. THUMPED ME ONE.
THAT EYE LOOKS REALLY PAINFUL.
IS THERE ANY STEAK IN THE HOUSE?
YES. I'LL GET YOU SOME.
RUB RUB
A TEN YARD START THEN I RELEASE THE DOBERMANS..
SNIFF
SNIFF

THE JERICHO WALL STREET JOURNAL

Friday 24 September 1993 BC 2 shekels (slashed to only 3)

It's Peace At Last As Philistines Sign Historic Accord With Children Of Israel

by Our Man in Gaza SAUL JOHNSON

A 1,000-year-old conflict came to an end last night when the Chairman of the Philistine Liberation Organisation, Mr Goliath, shook hands with Israeli leader Mr David.

Mr David told waiting scribes: "This is the day the stonethrowing has to stop."

Mr Goliath agreed, saying that he looked forward to a peace between the two nations that would last for three thousand years.

Camp David

The Middle East conflict, which has already filled 14 books of the Old Testament, began when the Children of Israel took over the land of the Philistines, claiming that they were "only obeying orders" from a Mr Yahweh.

Their then-leader, General Moses Dayan, 357, claimed that he had been specifically instructed to take over the "land of milk and honey" and declare the State of Israel.

The Philistines retaliated, most notably in the Seven Hundred Years War, and continued to lay claim to the West Bank, the East Bank and the Bank of Israel.

Following the new peace settlement, further deals are expected between the Children of Israel and the Hivites, Perizzites, Jebusites and Moabites.

On Other Pages

Ark Found On Top Of Mount Arafat 7

Daniel Found In Lion's Den — Care In Community Act Blamed 10

Save The Whale — Jonah's Inside Story 12

WORLD OF MUSIC

MELLOR JOINS BOARD OF PLO

by Our Opera Staff **E.N.O. Bloodigood**

MR DAVID Mellor, the world-famous expert on music, was today appointed as Chief Non-Executive Artistic Consultant to the Palestine Liberation Opera company.

The move led to a mass walk-out by a Jewish member of the board, Mr Stoneme I'mnotstandingforthis, who complained that he could not possibly sit in the same opera house as Yasser Arafat.

Mr Mellor hit back by saying that his collection of CDs was bigger than anyone else's, so there. "When it comes to knowing nothing about music," he said, "I can compete with anyone at the ENO."

This autumn's new productions at the Coliseum include *La Gaza Ladra* by Rossini, Puccini's *The Girl of the Golden West Bank* and the musical *The Man of De Sancha*.

LATE NEWS

MELLOR TO JOIN BOARD OF OBN

Mr Mellor has added a new appointment to his already burgeoning portfolio. Following recent articles, interviews and TV appearances defending the Prime Minister as "the greatest leader this country has ever known. Can I have my job back please?" he has now been appointed as Life President of the OBN.

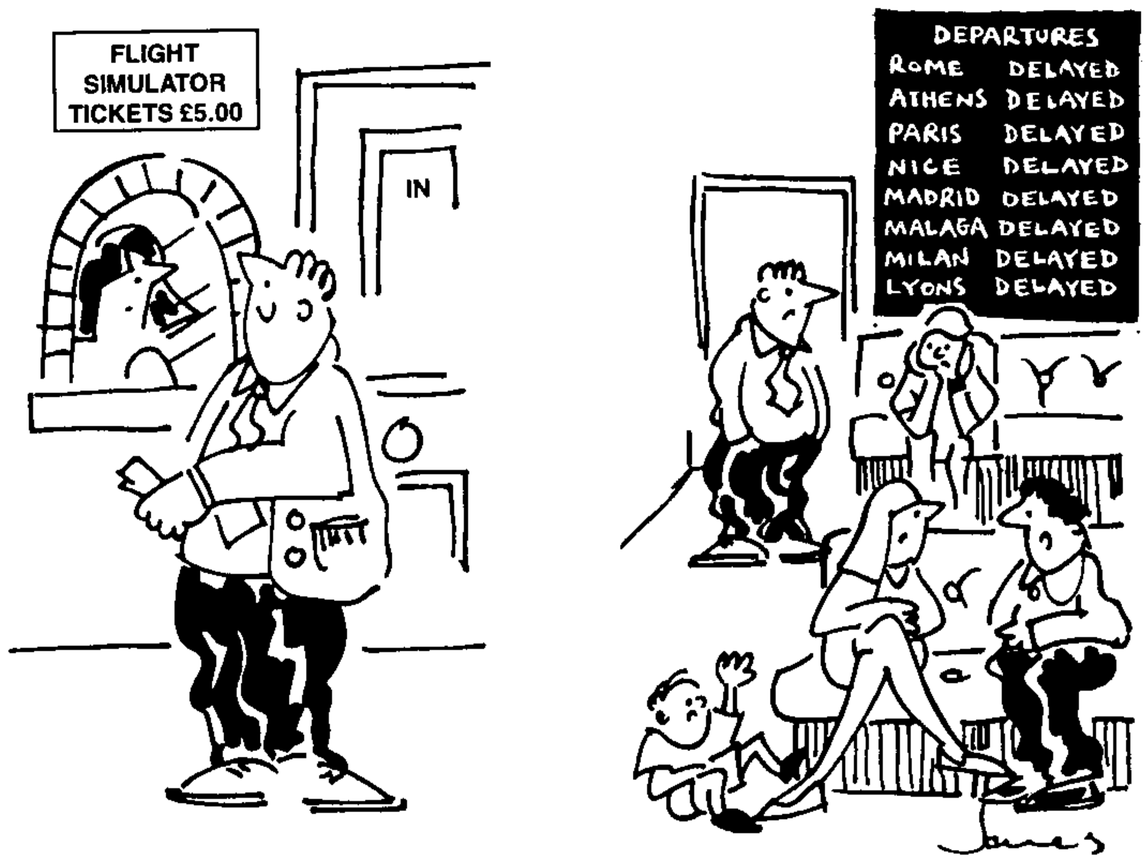
Chess Puzzle

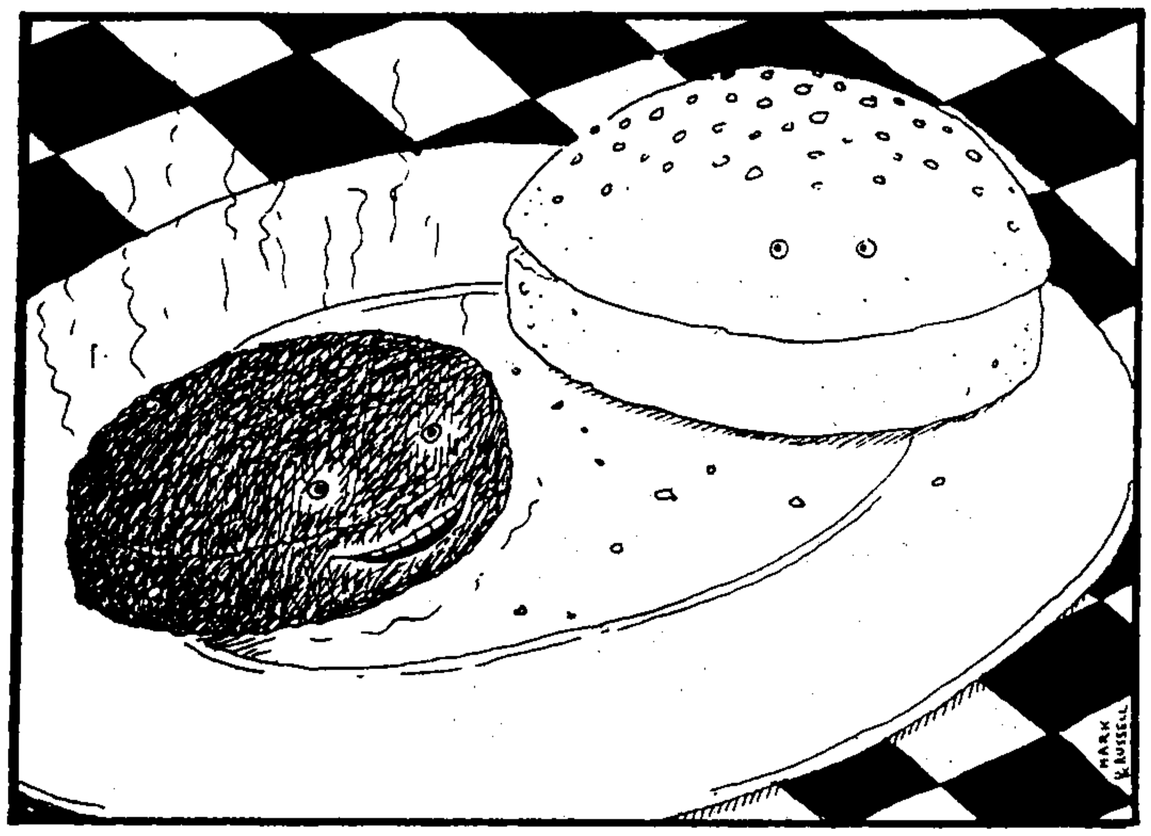
Black (Conrad) is laughing because his opponent's **Knight** (Andrew) has paid out millions of pounds on the *Times* chess championship that's turning into a fiasco. The opening gambit (known as the Desperate Digger) has failed to raise circulation and even Murdoch's usual porn tactic may not save him.

What should he do?

Answers to TV's Dominic Lawson, The Savoy Theatre, London W1.

NB. Entries must arrive before Short loses.





"Open Sesame"

That Chinese women athletes' training menu in full

Won Tons of Medals Soup

— ✻ —

Cooked Race

— ✻ —

Peking Drug

— ✻ —

Soya Cheating

— ✻ —

Fishy Balls

— ✻ —

Steroid Fried Vegetables

— ✻ —

Egg Nooworldrecords

— ✻ —

To drink:

Various blends of Chinese Teatosterone

— ✻ —

(Special Takeaway after positive urine sample)

Yes! It's Televised World Chess Championship Rhyming Slang!

Checkmate	**On too late**
Channel Four	**Terrific snore**
BBC2	**Go to the loo**
Kasparov	**Turn him off**
Nigel Short	**Which channel's the sport?**
Grandmaster	**Can't they play faster?**
GXF3	**The Bill's on ITV**
Match drawn	**Huge yawn**
Players get half	**Hardly a laugh**
Queen's knight	**No end in sight**
Chess board	**I certainly am**

(That's enough slang. Ed.)

Continuing our exclusive serialisation of

The Bamber Gascoigne Encyclopaedia Of Britain

by Bamber Gascoigne

Gascoigne, Paul A famous footballer, known by his nickname "Bazza".

Gummer, John Selwyn A British Conservative politician who held several posts in the Government.

Glastonbury A town in the West Country supposedly visited by Joseph of Arimathea, but now better known for its pop festivals.

Guardian, The A famous newspaper resorted to in desperation by readers trying to avoid reading extracts from my *Encyclopaedia of Britain* in *The Times*.

Garbage *(see Encyclopaedia of Britain by Gascoigne, Bamber, below).*

Gascoigne, Bamber Very important quizmaster and scholar whose most famous work was the great *Encyclopaedia of Britain*, which he published in 1993.

Girton College, Cambridge This is your starter for 10, no conferring. Which Renaissance painter drowned while attempting to tie a piece of cheese to the great duomo of Vicenza in the year 1538... zzz... zzz...

HOW THE TABLOIDS WORK

·J:K big boobs
*+:/:**
great
Given half a chance I'd have *-X:·X given her a good f**JX
To f*:*J*·
Right
5o clock time to call it a day
You and Cynthia have anything planned
Quiet night in front of the TV old chap

Advertisement

HER!∞

THE MUSICAL

THE EIGHTIES SENSATION YOU HOPED HAD BEEN FORGOTTEN!

Her! Relive that incredible decade, when everyone was a yuppy and believed in war and money! Seems a long time ago, doesn't it? But now they're back! The days of flared nostrils, loons everywhere, and an outbreak of psychopathia! It's like she never went away!!

Thrill to those old hits.

Sodemall

Let the Sun into your cabinet

Mass unemployment can be fun

This is the dawning of the Age of the Freemarket

AND MANY MORE

This one will go and on and on and on and on...

DIEU ET MON DROIT

HM Foreign Office

New Guidelines For The Benefit Of UK Citizens Wishing To Visit The Sunshine State Of Florida, USA, For Recreational Or Other Leisure Purposes

❶ Don't go.

❷ Keep away from Florida, whatever you do.

❸ You must be mad — they kill tourists. Don't you read the newspapers?

❹ Apparently they can spot a tourist car by the number plates. As soon as you've driven out of the airport, they jump on you. It's murder out there, I tell you.

❺ Go somewhere else.

❻ How about Bosnia?

© Hurdtrash Productions 1993.

TV HIGHLIGHTS

Die Hard III (BBC2)
Starring Norman Willis

Willis is meant to have retired but trouble starts when baddie John Smith tries to hijack the TUC Conference with his dreaded OMOV weapon. Willis refuses to die. No thrills. No spills. A few tears. *(7,888 minutes)*

Summer Holiday (BBC1)
Starring Cliff Richard and Una Stubbs

Everyone in Fleet Street is on their summer holiday so someone digs up a really terrible old story about Cliff and Una having an affair. There is a happy ending as the story fills up acres of space. Songs include "The Old Ones". *(b&w)*

Billy Connolly Live (ITV)

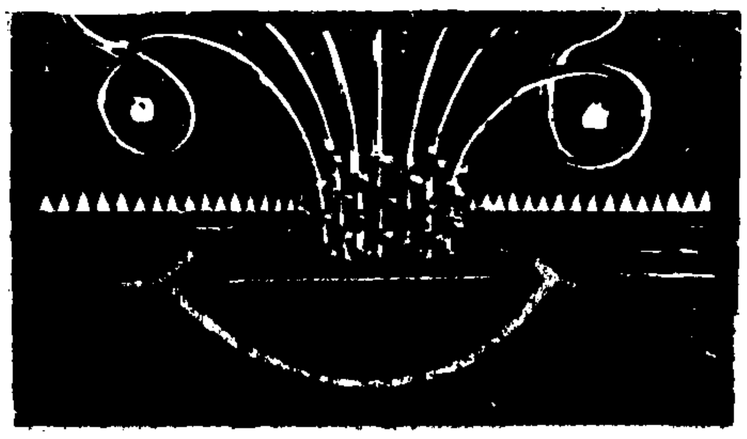
Billy confesses that at one stage he thought of becoming "funny" but instead he shaved off his beard, went to California and made lager adverts.

(That's enough TV. Ed.)

101 USES FOR A JOHN MAJOR (15)

GUARD FOR YOUR LETTUCE

DIARY



KENNETH BAKER

After the General Election of 1992, John Major offered me one of the great and historic Offices of Government, namely Secretary of State for Wales. To his obvious distress, I informed him that I had decided to return to the backbenches. Nevertheless, he put on a very brave face, waving both arms in the air, for which I admire the poor chap greatly. As I left his office, I couldn't fail to notice his Private Secretary brushing past me bearing a bottle of champagne and a selection of brightly coloured party hats, streamers and novelty masks. As Milton once observed, it is sometimes right to bury the sorrow of another's departure under the artifice of joy.

Since leaving office, I have, as I think Shakespeare once observed, enjoyed myself greatly, and my cheerful visage brings happiness and optimism to many a village street as I indulge my passion for the healthy country walk. Only yesterday, I went for a delightful and energetic stroll, in which, I might add, I saw my political philosophy put into practice. As I stepped out onto a busy road, waving merrily to one and all, I noticed an approaching car — obviously thrilled to see one of "Maggie's Ministers" up close! — swerve away from me and drive slap bang into another car. This second car — dreadfully damaged! — was then hit head-on by a lorry, whose load spilled out onto the rest of the street, causing a further eight vehicles to roll into one another!

"You've just caused a dreadful car crash," said an onlooker to me.

"Far from it, far from it!" I chuckled, winningly. "In fact, in the long term, I'll be hoping to see a far greater range of vehicles seizing every opportunity to pile up on top of one another, as this will ensure far more space on our roads, thus helping our transport infrastructure get ready for the fresh challenges of Europe — as well as creating many exciting new opportunities for our emergency services!"

Too often, I thought as I strolled away from the various bodies lying admirably still and motionless on the road, do we in Great Britain look on the gloomy side of things, failing to rise to new challenges with the spirit of our forefathers! So thinking, I returned home for the pleasures of a fireside tea and crumpets to enjoy all the very latest from Bosnia on the 6 O'Clock News.

Look back on the many years I spent as one of Margaret Thatcher's most trusted and loyal colleagues, I have come to the conclusion that there are three aspects to her character that are all too easily overlooked. She was a woman. She was a Conservative. And she was the Prime Minister. In the many mountains of words that have been written about Margaret, these three points — well known to her close friends, rarely noticed by those on the outside — are essential to an understanding of the lady. Often I am asked by my lovely constituents what Margaret was really like. "Kenneth," they say. "We all know that you yourself are absolutely first-class, with a fine brain, a ready smile and sound Conservative values, but what was *she* really like?"

"Well," I reply. "If you complete my new Memoirs, you will have discovered by the end that Margaret was a woman. And she was a Conservative. And she was Prime Minister. Quite a formidable combination — and quite a match, as you may imagine, for one K. Baker! More Pimm's, anyone?"

Contrary to popular belief, Margaret Thatcher relished a good argument with colleagues, and greatly admired those, like myself, who were not afraid to stand up for what she believed in.

I well remember one particularly vigorous Cabinet meeting in the Autumn of '88. John (Wakeham) had just finished congratulating Margaret on her first nine years and thirty-two weeks as Prime Minister, and then Cecil (Parkinson) had presented Margaret with a cut-glass decanter from her colleagues in commemoration of a magnificent speech on the previous Thursday, when I decided to take the bull by the horns. "Margaret," I said, with all the courage at my disposal. "I must beg to differ."

The hush was palpable, so much so that the room went quiet.

"Yes, Michael?" said Margaret.

"Kenneth," I retorted, quick as a flash.

"Yes, Kenneth?" said Margaret.

"I agree, Margaret," I began, "with absolutely everything you say. You are a great leader, a veritable Colossus of the Free World. The name of Margaret Thatcher will be remember as such for generations to come."

"And?" she replied.

"What do you mean 'and'?" I said.

"I thought you said you were begging to differ?"

My colleagues sat stock-still, obviously stunned that one of their number should choose to be so very outspoken.

"Yes, indeed, Margaret," I said. "I beg to differ from the Hard Left in the Socialist movement, who would seek to denigrate your extraordinary achievements. I disagree with them most strongly — I'm very sorry, but I do!"

Margaret paused. I daresay most of us were holding our breath, wondering what her reaction would be. But my passionately stated defiance was justified. "Thank you for having the nerve to stick your neck out, Kenneth. I admire you greatly for it," she said. And from that point on, she saw me as a man to be reckoned with.

The English language is the most valuable asset our nation has. In my opinion, we should cherish it for the exceptional way it has, above all, of putting things very clearly and concisely, and I would further add, above all, that avoiding long-windedness is also very important, for long-windedness — and repetition — are both things that, above all, get in the way of putting things very clearly and concisely, which is what the English language is most valuable for, above all. In my successful years as Secretary of State for Education, I tried to learn this to the left-wing teachers up against whom I came — but quite frankly for all the good it did I could of been speaking a completely different language!

Looking back on the part I was privileged to play in the turbulent Thatcher years, I am not too proud to admit that my achievements were many. Not only did I frame the Community Charge, which, I am delighted to say, rapidly shot the Tory Party back into the spotlight, but I also presided over the Education Reform Act, which has done nothing less than transform the very face of Education in this country, reducing the numbers of those with an education to an absolute minimum. These are achievements of which we may feel justly proud. Now, from the back-benches, I am delighted to watch these major Thatcherite reforms as they unravel before me, bringing fresh hope and happiness to so many of the future unemployed of all ages and backgrounds.

"Hi, Honey, I'm home for tea"

Dog fouling — council puts its foot down

Manchester Metro News

FIVE boys aged seven to 13 took a trip to hospital by ambulance after swallowing the hallucinogenic drug LSD.

Press & Journal

11.00pm
Nigel Mansell's IndyCar 93
The 13th race of the season is the Molson Indy Vancouver – 100 laps of a 1,677-mile, nine-turn temporary road course.

R.T.

Findus
Lean Cuisine
SALMON RÖSTI

Literary Review

Triumph of the Will

My Idea of Fun
Will Self
(Bloomsbury, £15.99)

SAY WHAT you like about Will Self — and in recent weeks many critics have said quite a lot — he looks the part. An "ageing, cadaverous Ted", with an uncanny resemblance to Nicholas Cage in *Wild at Heart*, his gleaming canines and general ticket collector on the Oblivion Express demeanour have struck terror into the hearts of many a literary chat-show audience.

Acts the part as well. A recent *Sunday Times* magazine profile provided an admiring and predictable resumé of the Self career to date — the philosophical studies at Oxford, sadly truncated by a drugs bust in the middle of finals, the heroin addiction — all calculated to awaken the envy of many a less turbulent writerly psyche. Sorry Anita, nice to have talked to you Iris, but you see you don't live an exciting enough life for our purposes. Stick a syringe in your arm and I'm sure we could manage a thousand words.

This preamble might seem to betoken an unnecessary concentration on the writer rather than the writing, but in the tangled media-governed forest we all inhabit, writing comes a poor second to personality. Why else should we all be so exercised by the thought that Martin Amis may or may not have left his wife for some literary groupie? You and I might think this indiscretion as newsworthy as the Scottish second division football results, but no: Martin Amis's infidelities, Will Self's junkie past, it's news, it's *relevant* darlings, and it's a great deal more alluring — at any rate to an unlettered journalist — than puzzling your way through that sea of print.

Which, in its way, is a bit of a comfort, because there isn't a great deal *to* the Will Self universe, as laid out in the bustling pages of *My Idea of Fun*; little interest in the arid, dusty landscape it patrols, only a few random figures lolloping over its stretched inclines (as the wordy, pleonastic Self prose would style it).

The book's plot — all about a marketing consultant named Ian Wharton and the manipulation of his psychic gift by a sinister familiar — and its incidental horrors (the penetrated pit bull terrier's head and so on) — well, I think we can pass on them. There remains the more interesting question of how this Best of young British novelist, this "master of dirty magical realism" actually writes.

Like many another writer of his age and susceptibilities, with extreme self-consciousness (no pun intended), so self-consciously, in fact, and with such an eye on the mirror that very few of his elaborate descriptions really describe anything, and the style, consequently, is wafer-thin. One character places "a femurous receiver back on its pelvic cradle". Now, does a telephone receiver look like a thigh-bone? Does it bollocks.

The same goes for the description of a man whose smooth face is "slashed open by his predatory mouth" — it's back to the early luxuriant Graham Greene, where revolvers droop like parched flowers and everyone is obviously *trying very hard*.

The tremendous "look-at-me-ness", bequeathed by, among others, Uncle Martin — the whole dismal racket of being asked to admire not only the writing but the spectacle of the writer performing — also extends to the clutch of wayside barbarities on which so many reviewers have commented. Unhappily, or perhaps happily, they aren't in the least horrific (the reader who wants to be authentically scared would do much better to try an M.R. James ghost story) for you can almost visualise the spectacle of roguish Mr Self, brow furrowed and tongue hanging out, drooling over his desk in the hope of coming up with something really sick.

Ah yes, something really sick. This is a significant book, though. Far from breaking new ground, it's perhaps the last gasp of the '80s Amis-fuelled screech-of-the-urban-psychotic tradition, books which for all their verbal dazzle have grown completely detached from anything that might be construed as ordinary life. The blurb's tough inquiries about the reader's notion of fun ("cocaine, nude teens and a hotel suite in Acapulco?" etc.) tell their own story, ie they're no one's idea of fun, not mine, not yours, only Will Self's. In much the same way, *My Idea of Fun* might tickle the author's vanity but it performs no other trick.

BOOKS & BOOKMEN

☐ **BY THE TIME these words are printed, "The Booker of Booker", sounding like a subfusc Highland chieftain, will have been announced.**

"The Booker of Booker", judged by three greybearded previous Booker Prize judges, W.L. Webb, David Holloway and Malcolm Bradbury, is likely to have been awarded to Solomon Rushdie. Not, of course, because *Midnight's Children*, his Booker-winner, is "better" than any of the other 26 winners to date but because, for political reasons, Solomon has to have been selected.

Booker didn't particularly want Rushdie to win, as much of its income these days comes from Arab countries. The government didn't want Rushdie to win because then it'd have to protect him all the more. The literary establishment didn't want him to win because clearly the decision was a political one.

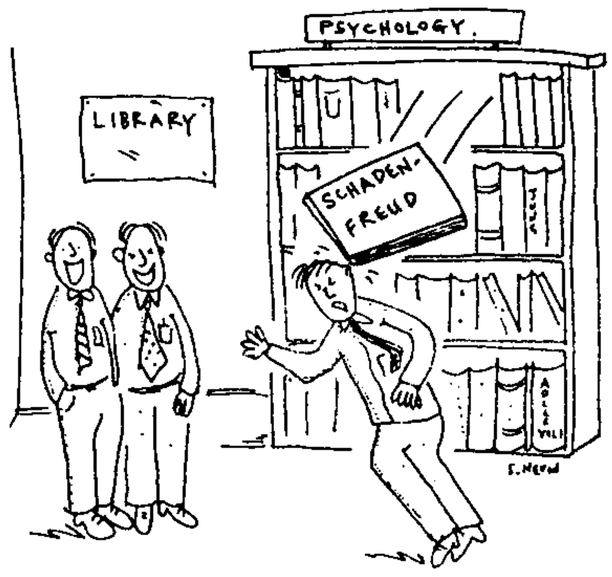
Poor Salman.

■ PUBLISHING takeovers are rarely subtle, but the rout of Hodder & Stoughton by Headline is likely to be one of the most dishonourable in the history of British publishing.

Tim Hely Hutchinson and his humourless Headline pals are interested in money, while the olde guarde at Hodders, although they often got it wrong, paid lip service to "good books".

When, a few months ago, Headline vanquished decent Hodders, it was assumed by Hely Hutchinson that the Headline executive responsible for a particular aspect of the business was superior to his or her opposite number at Hodder. The logic of this meant that even senior Hodder production staff, who in fact negotiated better deals with printers than opposite numbers at Headline, were chopped.

☐ **THE BBC's publishing arm has made an embarrassing cock-up (*sic*) in Thailand, the country whose domestic rumpy-pumpy industry is the envy of the uncivilized world.**



In doing so, the Beeb has followed the example of Longman, which angered the Thai authorities by publishing a dictionary in which Thailand was described as "a place where there are many prostitutes".

The Thais promptly banned the dictionary. Longman, which has a large circulation in Thailand, then bowed to muted threats of further bans, extending to its educational and other books, and withdrew the dictionary, grovelling.

Unfortunately the Beeb has made a similar mistake in launching its own *BBC English Dictionary — A Dictionary for the World* in Thailand, which has already been presented to the Thai royal family.

Princess Sirindhorn will not be amused by certain definitions in it. For although "Thailand" and "Bangkok" are harmlessly summarised, the Beeb's definition of "prostitute" is more than careless. A prostitute, it tells the world, is a person, usually a woman, who has sex with men in exchange for money. Fair enough. But to drive home the correct usage it adds the example: *"The tribal girls who go to Thailand work as prostitutes there..."*

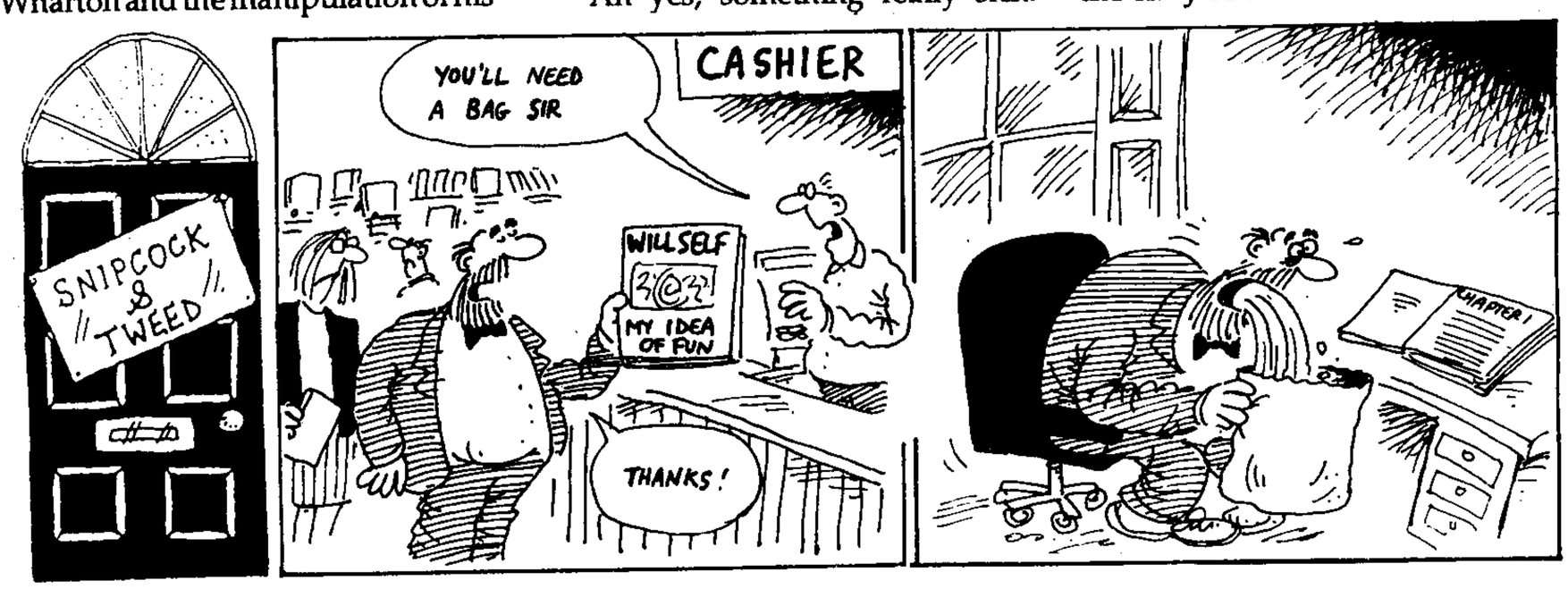
■ *IMITATION is the sincerest form of flattery — even if it does come from the United States and P.J. O'Rourke, right-wing Republican motormouth.*

Compare the covers, for example, of his latest book and that of Eye 762, which was published in March 1991. "All I am saying is give war a chance," says Saddam Hussain on Lord Gnome's satircal front page. "Give war a chance," echoes the world's most original comic writer, on his.

'Bookworm'

Sir Roger Elliott

IN THE issue of 15 January 1993 we suggested that Sir Roger Elliott had committed perjury when giving evidence under oath in proceedings brought by Andrew Malcolm against Oxford University Press by falsely claiming that the Press' supervisory board of delegates kept no record of general books which were due to be discussed at the delegates' meeting on 23 July 1985, when in fact he knew that such a record had been made in the form of a list of books dated 19 July 1985. This statement cast serious doubts on Sir Roger Elliott's personal and professional integrity. No such record had in fact been made and the list to which we referred was not genuine. Accordingly our imputation against Sir Roger was wholly unfounded and should never have been made and we apologise unreservedly to him for the distress and embarrassment caused.



footnotes

LOCKED IN THE PRIVY

Tony Newton

TONY NEWTON, leader of the House of Commons, is refusing to publish a report recommended for publication by the Queen's privy council, of which he is president.

The report is highly critical of the "commercial values" the government is trying to inject into universities and other educational establishments. And it brings to an end a long dispute between three philosophy lecturers at University College Swansea and the college authorities.

The three, Michael Cohen, Colwyn Williamson and Ann Maclean, criticised a new degree course in medical ethics. Degrees, they said, were being handed out to anyone who paid the substantial entrance fees and wrote a thesis. In one case a "thesis" which got its author a degree was copied straight out of textbooks. The examination board never met, and no recognisable academic standards were applied before the degrees were handed out.

The revelations were greeted by the college authorities, and the principal Brian Clarkson, with a terrible fury. The three were suspended and threatened with the sack for gross misconduct. Ann Maclean took a pay-off, was silenced with a gagging clause, and resigned. Williamson and Cohen refused to budge and stuck by their allegations. The college then circulated a series of libels about the two lecturers, one of which resulted in a payment by Clarkson to both men of £3,000 and an apology which was distributed to the philosophy departments of every British university.

Last year, after a series of public protests and student occupations, the college called on its "visitor" — the Queen — to solve the dispute. She appointed a retired judge, Sir Michael Davies, as her investigator. His report unequivocally backed what Davies called "the critics" against "the establishment". The allegations of the three lecturers, he reported, had "substantial justification". The three, he concluded, should be reinstated — and they have been. Prof Clarkson has announced his resignation from the end of the year, and has accepted a golden handshake of City of London proportions, believed to be of the order of a quarter of a million pounds.

GAME, SET & MATCH: Williamson (left) and Cohen

Sir Michael Davies wrote:

"A decision by the visitor is generally given in the simplest form without reasons. . . The present matter is entirely different. The facts are complex. Emotions have been high over a long period and there has been much local and national publicity. The council of University College has asked the visitor in effect to impose a peace treaty or at least an armistice in the war. In those circumstances I advise the visitor strongly that the whole of this report should be made publicly available."

The college, however, refused to publish the report. A Bristol printing firm then approached the visitor's representative, Tony Newton, and asked if it could publish it. No, said Newton.

And why not? Mr N.H. Nicholls, clerk to the privy council, tells the *Eye*: "Sir Michael did not recommend in his report that it should be published in the sense that it should be put on sale publicly. . . Sir Michael felt that the underlying rationale should be made available. It was for this reason that the lord president [Tony Newton] decided that the report should be distributed to the various interested parties".

In fact, Sir Michael recommended that the report should be made publicly available — which it hasn't been.

I asked Mr Nicholls whether Mr Newton, by refusing to publish the report, was defying the privy council over which he sits — and the Queen. The reply was: "No. The privy council as such was not involved. The lord president acts as visitor on the Queen's behalf".

A more convincing reply to the *Eye*'s questions might be found in a passage from the Davies report in which Sir Michael makes some robust remarks about the commercialisation of education. Here is a relevant passage (published here without Mr Newton's permission):

"On 14th June 1991, Prof Clarkson was quoted in the Times Education Supplement as follows: 'If this had happened in a company and I had been managing director those people (The Critics) would have been up the road the moment they kicked up the fuss they did. They would have taken us to an industrial tribunal, but they would have been off the payroll.' Whether this was a precisely accurate quotation is immaterial. The point is that neither the University College of Wales nor University College Swansea is a company in a profit-making or any other sense. They are academic institutions. I believe that this has not always been remembered in Swansea. . . This is an adult academic world, not a commercial jungle."

Neither Tony Newton, education secretary John "Panda" Patten nor any other Tory minister wants stuff like that floating about universities where anyone can read it.

Howard's The End

MANY PIECES have been published in the *Eye* attacking the home office's C3 department, where untrained civil servants decide what to do about alleged wrongful convictions.

The theme has been that C3 almost always recommends against reopening a case, and that sometimes a rational or frightened home secretary (Hurd or Baker, for example) overrules them. Now the *Eye* hears of a new twist to this theme. C3 recommended reopening a notorious murder case — but was promptly overruled by the new home secretary, Michael Howard.

The case is that of Sarah Thornton, who killed her husband, pleaded guilty to manslaughter, but was banged up for life for murder.

New evidence has emerged of horrific violence inflicted on Mrs Thornton by her husband, who had been sacked from the police for drunkenness. (The original police investigators of her case were personal friends of the dead man). She went to C3 asking for her case to be referred to the appeal court so she could plead provocation. After long deliberations C3 agreed and recommended that Howard reopen the case.

Howard would have none of it. He wrote across the papers: "I am not inclined to do this".

GAS LEAK

■ HERE'S a coincidence. On 25 August, an issue of the Eye hit the London streets containing an exclusive news item that British Gas was shelling out £410,000 for an eight-year lease on a box at Lord's.

Also on 25 August, a letter was sent from British Gas to Lord's saying that the cost of the box was "more than our budget can allow".

The letter came as a surprise to Lord's, who felt that the deal had already been clinched. An MCC spokesman told the Eye: "The price we quoted is the £410,000 you mentioned. It is the figure we quote everyone. It involves a 10-year commitment with a break period after five years. It is an actuarial figure, so I wouldn't imagine there would be any complaint about it."

The British Gas letter may have had something to do with the terrific hullabaloo set off by middle managers when they discovered in the Eye just how much their seniors spend on occasional summer entertainment.

Gore-Blimey of the FO

A NEW HATE figure is emerging in the corridors of Whitehall: she is Presiley Baxendale, the earnest barrister who asks the questions at Lord Justice Scott's Iraqgate inquiry.

FO hacks have been encouraged to denounce the relatively junior lawyer (QC,1992) on the rather slender grounds that she has the effrontery to use her own name, not that of her husband, and that she shares chambers with Anthony Lester QC, whose subversive qualities were proved beyond doubt by his founder membership of the late Social Democratic Party.

"Give yourself a chance to think before you answer the question," Ms Baxendale suggested patiently to no less a figure than the ambassador to Saudi Arabia, the Hon David Gore-Booth, who is almost certain to end up in charge of the foreign office, if for no other reason than his father was. Gore-Booth came to the inquiry determined to rattle Baxendale and Scott, and was himself repeatedly humiliated by both.

His constant refusal to listen to the questions, to denounce them without answering them, and his bland contempt for the right of the British people to information about what was being done in their name was widely and unflatteringly reported. This led to a petulant outburst on the morning of his second day at the inquiry, which wasn't reported at all.

"Objectivity" in the press reports of the previous day's proceedings, said Gore-Booth, had "given way to selectivity" — a surprising comment from a witness who had said in evidence: "Of course half the picture can be accurate."

Gore-Booth's attitude to press criticism has a long pedigree. In 1981, the foreign office became deeply concerned about reports in the *Eye* about the cover-up of the strange death of the nurse Helen Smith in Jedda, Saudi Arabia. In 1980, David Gore-Booth became the commercial attaché in Jedda. He was the guest at a lunch in May 1981 in Watlington, Oxon, which had clearly been arranged for him to meet Richard Ingrams, then editor of the *Eye*.

As the uneasy meal came to a close, Gore-Booth blurted out the FO case on the Helen Smith affair, namely that the consul involved, Gordon Kirby, was a "first rate chap — just the sort of chap the country needs", and it was "the duty of all of us to support him". Ingrams formed the clear view the FO was trying to shut the *Eye* up on the Helen Smith affair.

At the Scott inquiry, Gore-Booth revealed his deep understanding of people who do not live in Britain. Asked about bogus end-user certificates for arms exports from Britain to Iraq via Jordan, Gore-Booth replied: "It has been our assumption for generations that when the Jordanians tell us something it is true." This was too much for the *Financial Times*'s normally polite reporter Jimmy Burns, who burst out laughing. "Thanks very much over there," snapped the testy mandarin.

If Jordanians can be trusted by the FO, the same can't apparently be said for the Iranians. Baxendale asked Gore-Booth: "You have just said that the British public are not idiots. Then presumably neither are the Iranians?"

Back came the reply: "That is a very hazardous statement." After a pause Gore-Booth went on: "The Iranians do not think logically." No wonder, after such gems, that Gore-Booth and the FO got such a rotten press.

The big deceit relating to Iraqgate, however, is still unexposed. The key questions remain:

- How many arms and associated exports went from Britain to Iraq during the "embargo years"? The FO produced a letter from the defence export sales organisation (DESO) showing that "only" $222 million of defence equipment went to Iraq from Britain after 1985, when the embargo was first announced. This is irrelevant. Most British arms went to Iraq through "conduit countries" such as Jordan, Thailand, Saudi Arabia and Singapore. The total figure has not yet even been hinted at.
- Who stuffed their pockets from these exports? Not a single representative from the big boys in the defence industry -- Vickers, British Aerospace/Royal Ordnance, Racal, Marconi or any of their bankers or City advisers has yet given evidence to Scott.
- How closely involved were the security services? Although MI5 and MI6 gave evidence at the Matrix Churchill trial, Scott has indicated that they won't be appearing in public in front of him.

For all their exposure of the neanderthal elements in the FO, Scott and Baxendale may still be heading for what is known as the "Bingham solution" to public scandal. The name comes from the two inquiries conducted by Sir Thomas Bingham, also a judge, into sanctions-busting with the illegal regime of Rhodesia in the 1960s and 1970s, and later into BCCI (1992).

In both, Sir Thomas managed to blame the most monumental scandals on junior officials and civil servants -- and to keep the complicity of the security services well away from the public gaze.

Lord Gore-Booth, father of David, grappling with a fellow member of the Sherlock Holmes Society, 1968

DABBLING BROOKE

ONE PART of the national heritage which Peter Brooke, the heritage secretary, would be sad to lose is Lloyd's of London, the troubled insurance market.

Brooke is a "name" at Lloyd's. His syndicates are 15, 17, 172, 279, 373, 378, 386, 932, 936 and 989. Not all of these have brought the cabinet minister the profits he'd come to expect in the grand "heritage years" following 1976, when he first joined Lloyd's.

Now, almost all is gloom. The rise in vehicle crime caused trouble on his one motor syndicate (376), which has had to be closed down. Syndicate 17, managed by Stewart and Huhman, brought him losses of £1,400 per £10,000 in 1989 and £2,970 per £10,000 in 1990. Much worse are the problem marine syndicates 932 and 936, which have been plagued by litigation in the United States on pollution and asbestosis.

PS: Nothing to do with Brooke, this, but please can someone send me the lodge lists for the Fidentia, Lutine and Lloyd's masonic lodges, which bring together so many people at Lloyd's. I gather that at least three police officers from Wood Street police station are members of one or other of them, and that the son of one of these officers is a member of the highly successful Walsham Bros syndicate. Can anyone help with the names?

THE THINGS THEY SAY

"Recently, in Melbourne, I spent much time in the company of Dame Elizabeth Murdoch, a vivacious old lady who radiates intelligence, charm and fun, and who told me among oter things that she has 23 great grandchildren. She confirmed my impression, formed long ago, that Rupert Murdoch, far from being a monster, is essentially well-meaning, someone who wants to make the world a better, or at any rate a more exciting place".

Paul Johnson, Spectator, 11th September.

Prince Lui

■THE financial press is full of the disaster of London United Investments, the insurance holding group which crashed in 1990.

The group seems to have had liabilities of £9 billion, which is regarded as something of a record. And the reports are full of names: the chief crooks, the luckless creditors, the liquidators.

For some reason no one has mentioned the man who became an L.U.I. director chiefly to host dinners for important people and to give the group the publicity it felt it deserved.

His name? Prince Michael of Kent.

You can write to Paul Foot at 6 Carlisle Street, London W1V 5RG,or leave a message for him on 071 287 3183

In the City
See over ➔

In the City

THE SUDDEN prospect of the return and trial of ex-Wardley chief executive Ewan Launder, held in London pending extradition proceedings, will bring no smiles to his former bosses at Hong Kong Bank, now owners of the Midland.

On the contrary, a Launder trial — or his appearance as a witness in the pending corruption trial of old friend George Tan — could both raise and answer many outstanding embarrassing questions about Hong Kong Bank's role in the collapse of Tan's Carrian group 10 years ago. Questions which not only the bank but the Hong Kong government and the British foreign office have done everything to silence in the interests of a political cover-up and relations with both China and Malaysia.

After his arrest earlier this month it was stated by Hong Kong's Independent Commission against Corruption (ICAC) that they had been hunting Launder for six years. But an arrest warrant on a corruption charge had only been issued in 1989.

Clearly the ICAC had not been looking very hard. For back in 1988 the *Eye* reported that Launder had established an office in London for his Bahamas-registered company, Quail Investment. Indeed, Launder even acquired a £1 million London home in Chelsea. At that time Launder was reported to be back in business with Tan — astoundingly acquitted of fraud by a judge who was at best incompetent — doing property deals in New York.

Launder remained in London until (learning, it seems, of the supposedly secret warrant), around 1989 he moved his home to Spain's Costa del Crime where he felt safer. His property dealings, however, continued — but now in the former East Germany. Again Tan was rumoured to be his partner.

Launder commuted between Spain and Berlin but was careful not to enter Gibraltar, where he registered some companies, for fear of arrest.

Launder's concerns were justified. Ever since he left Wardley, soon after Carrian crashed in 1983, there had been rumours about why Hong Kong Bank came to take such a major hit, perhaps more than $100 million, when Carrian went down owing $1 billion. The bank had been the second largest lender to Carrian, which Wardley advised. Shortly before it had been whacked again by the collapse of Eda Investments, another property group run by a Tan associate.

The word was that Launder had received substantial pay-offs to influence loans to both Carrian and Eda. It was said several million dollars had found their way into bank accounts in the Bahamas and Switzerland.

Just how high the suspicions of Launder went was revealed last year when it emerged than none other than Sir John Bremridge, Hong Kong's financial secretary, had described the former Wardley boss as "a crook on the fringe for a long time". Bremridge made this candid comment during a meeting with a representative of the Malaysian government, which had carried out an intensive investigation into how the state-owned Bank Bumiputra came to lose almost $800 million in Carrian. A memo of this secret meeting was read out in the high court during an extradition hearing for former Bank Bumiputra executive Lorraine Osman.

Launder now faces extradition for alleged corruption involving accepting nearly £4 million in relation to £55 million in loans to Carrian and Eda. If sent back to face trial, the Launder case may well finally explain how it was possible that large loans, some unsecured, could have been made by Hong Kong Bank on the word of just one man, however influential.

There are those in Hong Kong who suspect that whatever his own role Launder may also have taken the fall for more senior figures in the bank, who similarly enjoyed the hospitality and generosity of George Tan. Launder was a man who both knew too much and had to be kept quiet. Which may also explain why it has taken so long to catch up with him.

THAT bankrupt Landhurst Leasing should have been prepared to help fund Terry Venables' purchase of shares in Tottenham Hotspur by paying well over the odds for pub fixtures and fittings will surprise no one who knows Ted Ball and the profligate way he handled the banks' money at Landhurst.

Ball, a sad case with a desperate desire to be seen in sporting circles and who used the Landhurst cheque book to get there, had obtained entry to the Spurs directors' box well before the Sugar-Venables bid in 1991.

He had made substantial loans to such White Hart Lane notables as director Tony Berry (a Venables ally now with Sugar) and Philip Green, as well as would-be buyer Frank Warren. Ball knew Berry from pre-Landhurst days.

So eager to please was Ball, whose champagne lifestyle started at breakfast, that any sporting figure was guaranteed as much as they wanted, often on minimal documentation. The results of Ball's generosity are now being probed by the administrators put in by the banks who stand to lose a large part of their £120 million, and by the Serious Fraud Office (SFO).

One example of Ball's generosity will demonstrate why providing £1 million to Venables on the "security" of leased fittings worth little more than £100,000 owned by a company of which he was only one shareholder and not even a director is nothing unusual.

Just before it all but collapsed Ball was discussing a similar deal with George Walker for Brent Walker. Ball was prepared to lend the increasingly desperate Walker £2.5 million against the ailing leisure group's office equipment and fittings which were likely to be worth far less. That deal did not go through.

Ted Ball would not have thought twice about helping out El Tel with the banks' money.

NEWS THAT, fresh from their acquittal, the deadly T.C. Coombs duo Andrew Kent and Patrick Mahon are indeed contemplating applying to the Securities & Futures Authority to resume mugging unsuspecting clients, makes timely a developing furore in Canada concerning one of their hot stocks of yesteryear, Galactic Resources. Especially as Galactic's promoter, Vancouver Stock Exchange favourite Robert Friedland, is currently boosting his latest creation, Venezuelan Goldfields, by joining forces with mining giant Rio Tinto Zinc in a Papua New Guinea gold prospect.

From 1986 Galactic was in receipt of many millions from British institutional investors on the back of its gold mine at Summitville, Colorado. Coombs took a team of fund managers to visit Summitville in 1987. Two years later Sphere Investment Trust, Target unit trust group and clients of National Westminster were among European investors who subscribed C$14 million for shares. In December last year Galactic filed for bankruptcy.

The cause was a rapidly escalating environmental disaster at Summitville. Galactic chose to use a cyanide leaching process to extract gold from ore dumped in an open pit. The pit lining was breached and chemicals began pouring out, polluting farmland and killing fish over a near 20-mile radius. The mine was closed last year. The US environmental protection agency estimates the cost of the Summitville clean-up at up to $100 million. A criminal investigation is under way and there could be action taken against Galactic and possibly Friedland, who resigned as chairman in 1990 by which time the problems were already known.

Not surprisingly, Friedland is remarkably sensitive about Summitville as it can hardly impress RTZ or the investors who have so far pumped $50 million into his new company, which is planning to sell five million shares to finance the $60 million cost of its 20 percent stake in the Papuan prospect.

So much so that last month Friedland obtained a court injunction in Canada to prevent a TV documentary about Galactic and his colourful career, which includes jail time for LSD manufacturing and trafficking.

Meanwhile, European investors approached to buy into Venezuelan Gold would do well to recall that Robert Friedland is one of those promoters who have helped the VSE to maintain its role as the scam capital of the world.

'Slicker'

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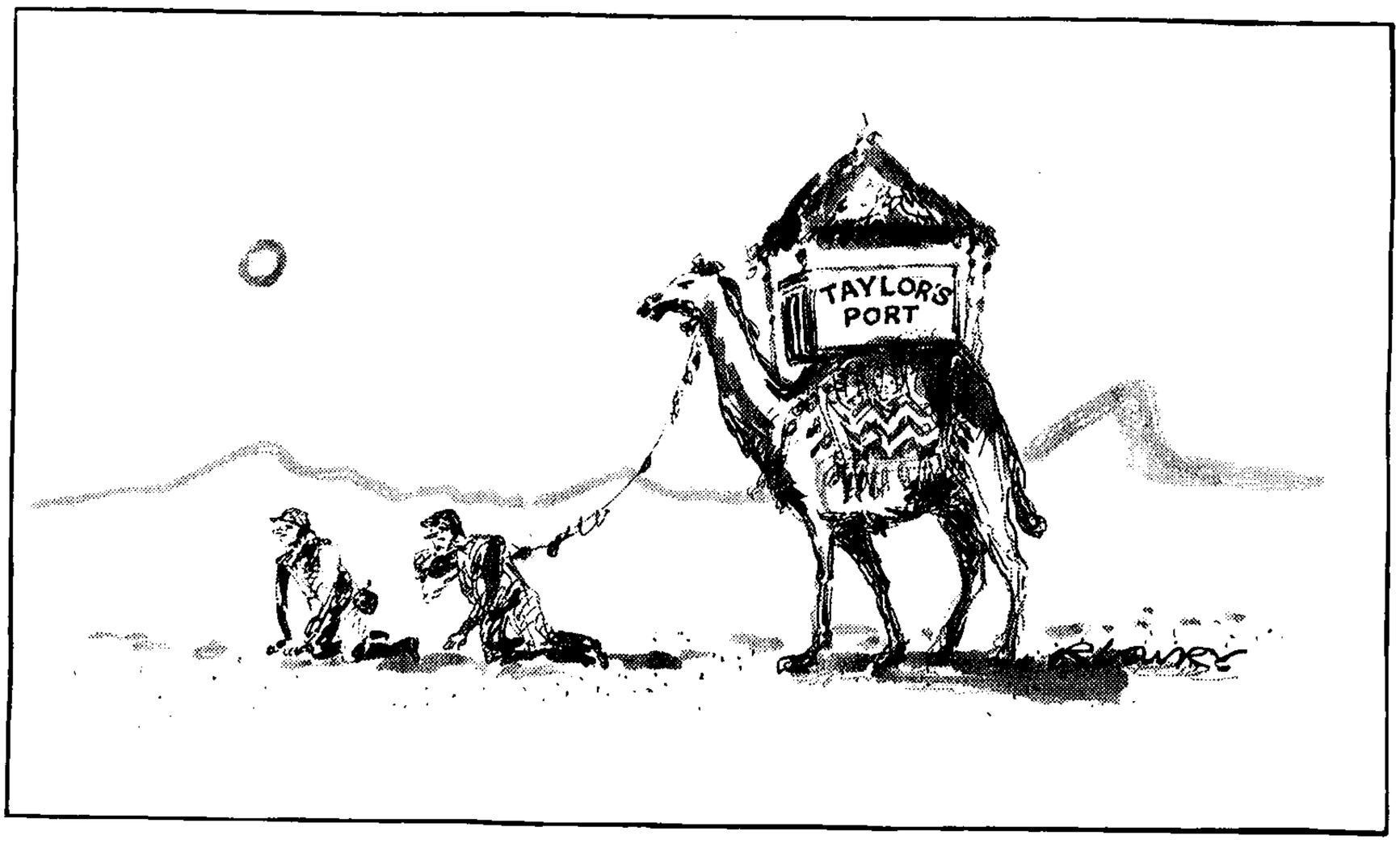

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SARA MAITLAND, Sunday Times

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POLITICIANS — who the hell do they think they are, and how can we get rid of them? A practical guide. £7.99 (includes P&P), payable to PAUL GREENWOOD. Send to: SNAKEBITE, 67 London Road, Tunbridge Wells TN1 1DT.

NATURISM 2000 comprehensive handbook £3. NATURIST FOUNDATION (Dept. P), Naturist Headquarters, Orpington BR5 4ET.

EROTIC FICTION catalogue, £1.00 to DOMINO BOOKS (PE), PO Box 83, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 2RJ.

AIRMILES AND VIRGIN standbys required — will pay. 081-442 1817.

STRANGE ROMANTIC encounters. Author seeks genuine accounts for new book. Box 0129.

WANTED, SOLICITOR/ barrister for unfortunate family against local authority. Genuine. 0225 707894.

SERIOUS SCOTSMAN
of limited means
urgently needs
genuine title,
prefer Scots.
Box 0529.

SOS — PLEASE send unwanted airmiles. Many thanks. Box 0229.

APPLIED LINGUISTICS TESOL, MA/MSc? If you've got one, I need you. Box 0329.

"HOUSE OF Whipcord", 1970s British horror movie wanted on VHS video. Box 0429.

VIZ BACK numbers/collections wanted. Box 7929.

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDENT urgently requires sponsorship/donation for masters. Help gratefully appreciated. Box 1429.

THREE LADS and Land Rover, Timbuktu Sahara expedition funds, info much appreciated. Box 1529.

TIGREAN REFUGEE, has £4,000, needs £12,000 loan to complete Post-Grad course. Box 1629.

FINANCE NEEDED for dance film. Box 1729.

ANTI-VIVISECTION AGENCY needs benefactor to help doctor establish cruelty-free drug company. Box 1829.

STUDENT REQUIRES "air miles" tokens to complete research in US. Please help! Box 1229.

DESPERATE POSTGRADUATE needs £3,000 to complete research. Any donations gratefully accepted. Box 1329.

SPONSORSHIP REQUIRED for 3rd year of medical type BSc. Alternatively finance/help needed to pursue ongoing legal proceedings of negligence/maladministration against L.E.A. Please help justice be done. Box 1129.

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FEMALE STUDENT urgently requires £6,000 donation/loan. Will repay. Box 1929.

R.G.N. REQUIRES sponsorship for district nursing course. Box 2029.

£3,000 SOUGHT to complete writing project, Colombian street-life from unusual angle. Donations gratefully received. SAE for details, references. Box 2129.

UNEMPLOYED AND unhealthy, need private treatment to avoid NHS queues delaying return to work. Donations appreciated. Box 2229.

ANY DONATION to assist struggling small business stay afloat into the upwave genuinely appreciated. Box 2329.

VOLUNTEER DRUG counsellor needs £1,000 to find accommodation and pay training fees. Box 2429.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY law student, genuinely penniless. Father is a hospital cleaner. Will provide evidence. Donations totalling £2,000 urgently needed. Box 2529.

BROKEN HEARTED philanthropist desires wealthy benefactor to restore faith in humanity. Box 2629.

HELP! £20,000 needed urgently to save home/business. Badly let down by partner who robbed us. Loans, advice, donations greatly appreciated. Thanks. Box 2729.

WATER NEEDED by Cameroonian village. Volunteers assembled, flights booked, funding has failed. £5,000 needed urgently! All donors will receive project report. Cheques to SAFAD, Box 9029.

INNOCENT ENGLISHMAN desperately seeking funds for appeal overseas. Will repay on return. Box 12328.

MONEY MAKES the world go round. My world's going backwards. Make it happen for somone else! Box 1327.

HELP? FUNDS needed for film course. Thanks. Box 2628.

DESPERATELY SEEKING £19,000 to establish foundation for small business. Donations and interest-free loans welcome. Box 1029.

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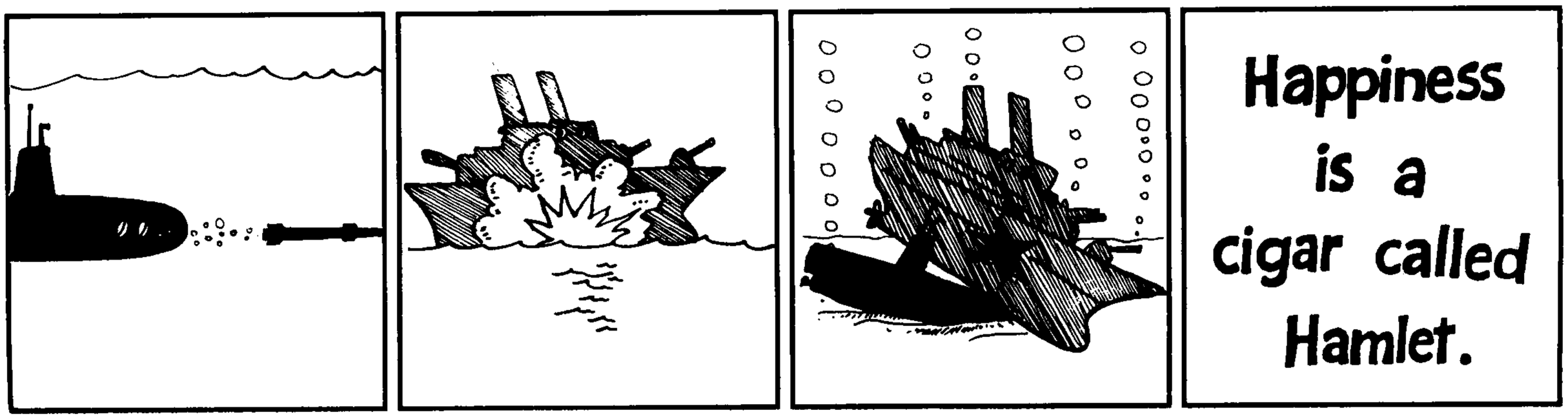
GRADUATE SEEKS employment. Anything, anywhere. Box 0729.



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MULTIMEDIA COMPANY. Young, ambitious, seeks backing to develop titles. Box 0929.

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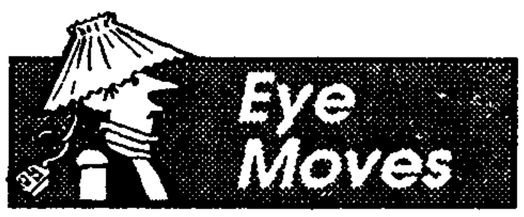

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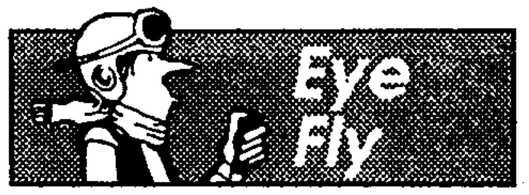
SHARING? LETTING? Booklet gives each sharer polite guidance to help stay friends. £2 each from BLOT, PO Box 969, Bristol BS99 1ZH.



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443 EYES, numbers 218-675, fifteen missing. Offers 081-800 0806.

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WORLDWIDE PENFRIENDS. Details from J. CROSBIE, 23 Mansefield, Grantshouse, Duns, Berwickshire TD11 3RN.

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FLOWERS OF The East. The Professional Thai Marriage Bureau. 1 Barn Cottages, Curtis Gardens, Dorking, Surrey.

TOTAL LOSER, late twenties, seeks woman with superhuman tolerance and advanced sense of humour. London. Box 6129.

CANADIAN COWBOY seeks English rose. Attractive, athletic, adventurous helicopter pilot, 36. Arabian Gulf flier, world player. Accomplished at tennis, golf, chess, surfing, horses. Enjoys theatre, travel, politics. Dancing through life! Care to waltz? Box 5629.

I WOULD LIKE to meet a kind, considerate, caring and cerebral female who is "down to earth" but enjoys fantasy and "the good life" (not the TV programme). I am all of the above (I think) except female. My life is a bowl of Cheerios as far as that goes. Is there anybody out there who think they know? I am tall and handsome, not a bozo. Life is short and sweet, so let's meet and make the planet glow. I'm not exaggerating, the bank balance is staggering. No replies from E9 though. Box 5729.

BORING FAT ugly single male, 31, looking for a lot more than he deserves. London area. Box 5829.

ENGLISH GUY, 28, working abroad, good looks, funny, arty and interesting, seeks a beautiful long-haired girl for amusing correspondence and friendship. UK/Europe. Please write. Photo? Box 3129.

GRAMPION EXECUTIVE, tall, dark, handsome-ish, seeks lively late 20s/30s, bright, forceful female, for laughs, affection, lots of fun, outdoors and cultural events. Aberdeen isn't beyond civilisation. Box 5929.

FRIENDLY LAD, 21, seeks friendly lass, 18-30, for unashamedly friendly weekends. Midlands. Box 6029.

PAMINA (26) SEEKS Tamino (London, South). Box 8129.

THINKING GREEN Christian male, 30, into quiet walks and loud music, seeks soulmate or close approximation. Oxford. Box 7429.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 27, missing misspent youth, seeking wild life with sensuous lady (25-30). S.Yorks. Box 7529.

PROFESSIONAL MARRIED male, tall, slim, attractive, 36, very affectionate but in emotional desert, seeks discreet dangerous liaisons with champagne-loving female. Age/colour unimportant. Notts/Lincs. Box 7629.

CHEERFUL, UNPRETENTIOUS female graduate, 30, living in tiny Somerset cottage seeks male friend. Tall, slim, sensitive, quiet, enjoys countryside, nature, farms, dogs, horses, music, art, conversation. Can dress up but prefers jeans. Non-smoking eccentrics welcome! Box 7729.

EX-PAT'S WIDOW, attractive, charming, feminine, stylish, 5'7" (of continental origin). Many interests, used to a good lifestyle, seeks affluent gentleman with SoH, 55-65, to enjoy life again. Photo please. Box 8029.

WITTY ARTICULATE male, 44, married but lives alone, seeks affectionate physical relationship with caring female. Non-smoker, GSoH, many interests. London based, can travel. Box 8229.

GLOBETROTTING 50 YEAR old gentleman trapped in dead marriage seeks lady to share closeness and romance as well as occasional travel. Age 30 to 50, Midlands to London. Phone number ensures discreet contact. Photo appreciated. Box 6229.

ELEGANT, UPMARKET, older woman (married), needs energetic Anglo Saxon graduate to share London laughter and weekly passion. Box 6329.

FIT, PROFESSIONAL male, 33, seeks an athletic female, preferably police, ex-forces or sports teacher etc., for a lasting romance and adventure. Must enjoy rugged outdoor life and long mountain walks in Wales. Photo, phone no. please. London area. Box 6429.

DREAMY ATTRACTIVE arty early fifties laterla thinker (F) seeks unattached cultured intellectual male for fun relationship. Somserset. Box 6529.

WOMAN SEEKS. Box 6629.

GLAMOROUS FEMALE scientist, 33, seeks tall handsome unfashionably wealthy airhead to experiment on. BS approved methods only. Results guaranteed. Cardiff. Box 6729.

SINGLE PROFESSIONAL male (43), tall, slim, sensitive, seeks female for outings and maybe more. Box 6829.

ATTRACTIVE VEGETARIAN, 24, with warm outgoing personality seeks preferably American/Canadian partner (30-40, n/s) who is well educated, creative, caring and emotionally open for permanent healthy relationship. Box 6929.

DEMANDING BUT soft male grad, 31, seeks similar female to relax and enjoy life with, good food, country walks, etc. North/N. Yorks. Box 3229.

RENAISSANCE MAN, young 39, creative, republican, francophile, somewhat financially challenged, seeks attractive renaissance woman, 25-34. London/South East. Box 5229.

LONDON PROFESSIONAL man (44) seeks sensuous woman for steamy uncomplicated relationship. Phone 071 722 1560 during office hours.

ATTRACTIVE TO cat: Music/book loving lefty history graduate, thirty something, fair, 5'2" female currently living in outpost of Britain. Sensitive Sagittarian and all that baloney seeks kind jolly man with similar outlook to write and travel occasionally. Photo appreciated, will send picture of cat in return. Box 5329.

WACKY IRISH oilman (24, 6'1") seeks long-haired Spanish Dictionary for mutual fluency. Box 5429.

INTELLIGENT, SLIM, professional male, 32, complete with own hair, teeth, and the usual vices, seeks female (20-40) for discreet liaisons and/or correspondence. All replies answered. Box 5529.

MALE, 42, ATTRACTIVE, friendly, considerate, solvent, seeks sincere curvy petite female 30+ for uncomplicated physical and emotional stimulation. Discretion assured. Phone appreciated. London, S/East. Box 4429.

ABSOLUTELY FABULOUS — south Manchester lady, beautiful eyes and sparkling personality, enjoys theatre, wining and dining and good conversations. Seeks attractive professional man, n/s with GSoH, 36-46. Photo appreciated. Box 4529.

SUCCESSFUL LONDON writer, 50, needs intriguing sub-plot to add depth to his safely married existence, preferably involving a woman who is intelligent, joyful and available afternoons. Box 4629.

SOLIDLY MARRIED man, 50, seeks intelligent younger woman for experience-expanding afternoons. Arty types preferred, but the main thing is a huge capacity for joy. No materialists please. Box 4729.

EL GRECO seeks Rubens to compare brushes. Box 4829.

EXPATRIATE PROFESSIONAL, 33, resident Southern Germany, seeks female who likes travel, sailing and other watersports, for serious relationship. Box 4929.

ESSEX/SUFFOLK borderer, professional, artistic, seeks n/s 40s damsel with GSoH for mutual benefits. Box 5029.

TALL, DARK, handsome, occasionally untruthful married male seeks occasional escape with independent or married female aged 30-45. East Anglia area. Box 5129.

SINGLE MALE, n/s, 37, 5'9", good lover, affectionate, understanding, enjoys meals out, holidays abroad, not a male chauvinist, seeks an affair with married woman any age, anywhere. Can travel. Box 3529.

CYNIVAL MALE thirty something seeks optimistic female he can disillusion or vice versa. Box 8329.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 41, married, arts interests, seeks warm sensual woman for discreet relationship. Your pleasure is mine. E. Mids/London/anywhere. Box 8429.

EMBARRASSED? SO AM I... So let's meet and change the subject. Richard Gere seeks Demi Moore, if only in our dreams, eh? Photo ensures reply. Box 8529.

MALE, 23, GRADUATE, living in London, far too inexperienced for his own good, seeks female for shallow relationship. Box 8629.

HAPPY NONCONFORMIST consultant ecologist, 32, seeks jazz woman. London/Southwest. Box 8929.

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Discretion assured.
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TALL MALE,unattached 65, seeks educated witty affectionate womanly female. Box 7129.

GORGEOUS GIRL (28) seeks thoroughly decent bloke (20s-30s) preferably TDH, definitely GSoH, professional single arty/thespian/media type. Cardiff/Wales/West/anywhere. Photo. Box 7229.

NICE CHAP, 34, seeks nice girl, 20-35, to exchange naughty letters with. Box 7329.

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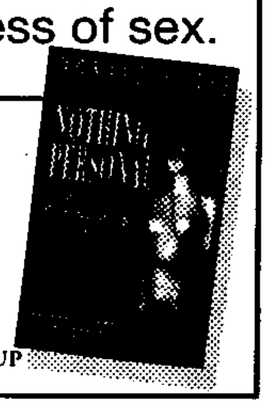

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I'M LOOKING FOR an occasional woman friend, one who adores France, likes opera, walking, and pretty underwear. I'm 48, n/s, professional. Married but genuinely free. Box 3329.

LONDON MAN, articulate, happy 40, looking for lady for a discreet walk on the wild side. Sense of humour and fun an advantage, or share mine. Box 3429.

ATTRACTIVE-ISH LADY, 27, needs kind, gentle, affectionate man for good conversation, laughs and maybe more? Wilts/Oxon. Box 4029.

SLIM BLONDE, 31, happy, affectionate, seeks kind gent (London). Lawyer/accountant? Box 4129.

ATTRACTIVE, TALL blonde university lecturer, East-European origin, seeks genuine gentleman 45+ for permanent relationship. Box 4229.

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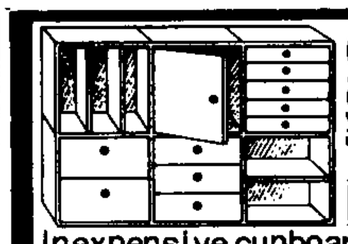

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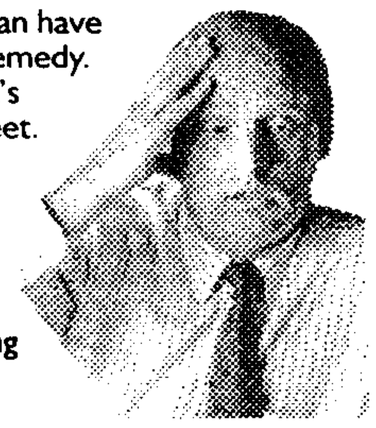

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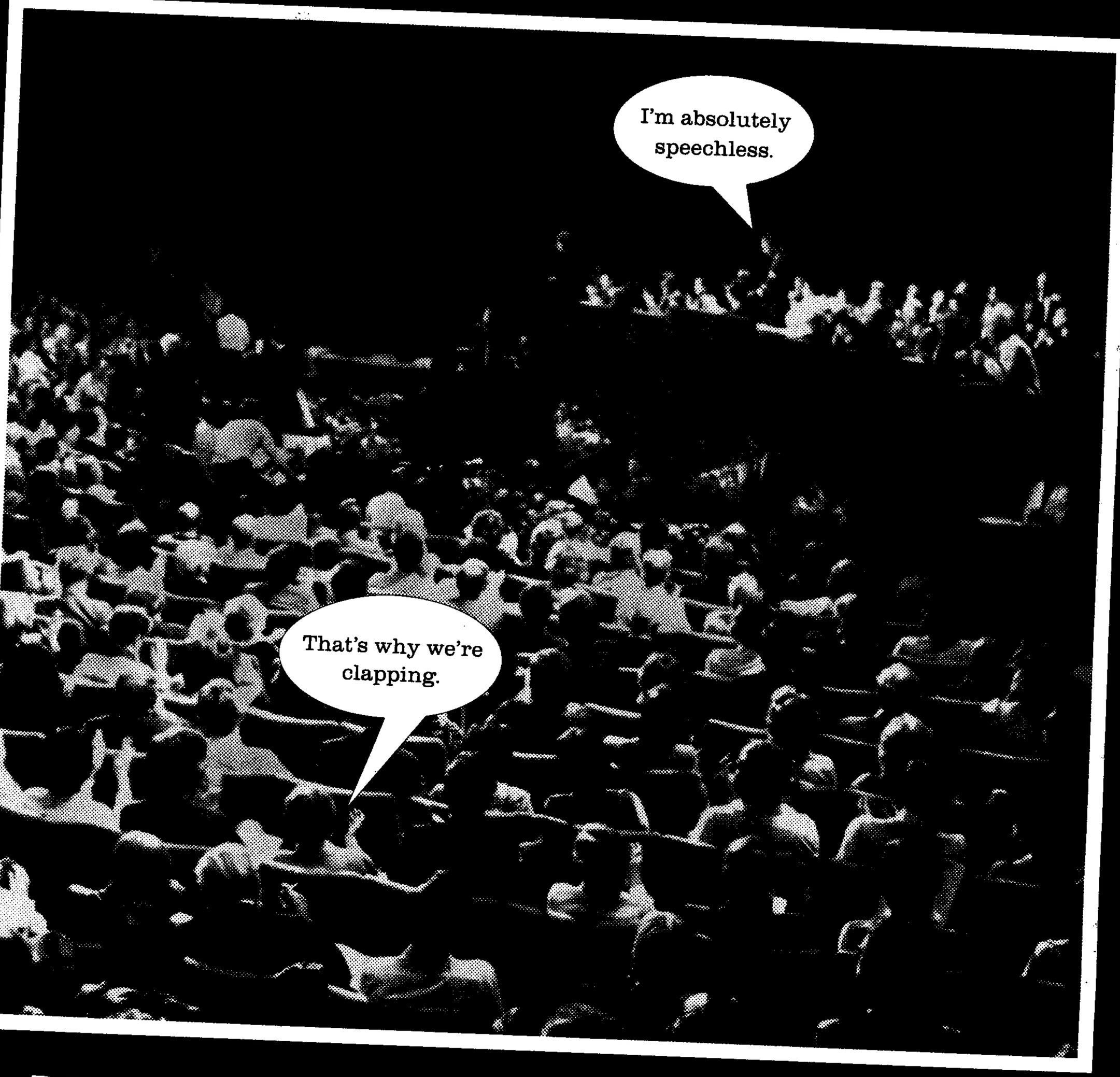

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